ZELIA

IN THE

DESERT.

FROM THE FRENCH.

BY THE LADY WHO TRANSLATED
"ADELAIDE AND THEODORE;" AND
"ANECDOTES OF HENRY IV. OF FRANCE."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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ZELIA,

IN THE

DESERT.

THE title of this hiſtory promiſes nothing very intereſting to thoſe who are only affected by the great events which happen in the world. Thoſe which I am going to relate are not of this kind; and can only merit the attention of ſuch as are poſſeſſed of tenderneſs and ſenſibility. It is to them I addreſs myſelf; as they will, in a peculiar manner, compaſſionate my fate, by following me in the deſert, where I have lived ſo long, abandoned by the world, and wholly ignorant of all that paſſed in it.

I was born at London, my father being a native of England, though my mother

was a Frenchwoman. My father's fortune had experienced many viciſſitudes. He had for a long time been employed in the ſervice of the Dutch Eaſt India Company, and had a conſiderable eſtabliſhment in the iſland of Java, near to Batavia. Being obliged to go thither with my mother, and both being unwilling to expoſe me to the dangers of ſo long a voyage, they determined on ſending me to Paris, under the care of a governeſs whom they could truſt, in order to convey me to my grandmother Madame de Theadon. At that time my father's intention was to eſtabliſh me at Paris, and to return thither himſelf, when he left the Eaſt Indies; but my mother's death made him alter his determination. Too young at that time, to be ſenſible how great a loſs I had ſuſtained, I could not foreſee what effect this would have on my future deſtiny. From that fatal moment my father thought of nothing but coming to live in his own country, where he hoped to receive greater

greater conſolation from his own relations, than from thoſe of his wife, who were ſettled at Paris. He did not, however, think it neceſſary as yet to acquaint me with his intentions, as he was happy to think I was with ſo ſenſible and tender a relation, who ſupplied his place, in taking that care of my education which he was prevented from doing. On this account, and for fear that his new determination, ſo contrary to that of which he had firſt given her hopes, ſhould make her leſs attentive, or leſſen her attachment to me, he avoided mentioning it in any of his letters: but finding I approached an age in which my ignorance of his intended ſchemes might become dangerous, he thought it right to diſcover his intentions to Madame Maſtique, the governeſs to whom he had intruſted me. He intreated her to make uſe of every poſſible means to inſpire me with a preference for England rather than France, which country I was to quit in a few years. My governeſs, who diſapproved my father's

ſcheme, thought it proper to acquaint my grandmother before ſhe mentioned it to me; and as Madame de Theadon had views of eſtabliſhing me near herſelf, by marrying me to her nephew, ſhe wrote to my father, and ſaid every thing in her power to endeavour to alter his mind, without mentioning her own deſigns. But finding ſhe could not ſucceed, ſhe appeared to yield to the repeated ſolicitations of her ſon-in-law. It was then ſhe informed me of my father's intentions, and did not leave me ignorant of her own. I did not hear this intelligence with indifference, although I was threatened that I was to quit France in two years; and that ſhe did not intend I ſhould marry her nephew till after that time. I was then in my fifteenth year. I had frequently met at the houſe of Madame de Lentitaire, who was a friend of my grandmother's, the young Count d'Ermancour; he was born of an illuſtrious family, highly diſtinguiſhed for their integrity and courage. His father, after ſerving in the army thirty years

years with great honour, retired to one of his eſtates in Normandy, where he lived happy and contented.

The cuſtom of ſeeing me often, had inſpired young d'Ermancour with tender ſentiments in my favour. Notwithſtanding the apparent indifference with which I had received his profeſſions of love, and the knowledge he had of my father's intentions, as alſo thoſe of my good grandmother, his paſſion daily increaſed; and he did not deſpair of gaining my heart, and at length obtaining my hand from my parents. I was very far from being ſo inſenſible to his affection as I appeared to be; but whilſt he accuſed me of an indifference which I did not feel, I was witneſs to a ſcene which greatly diſtreſſed me: the young perſon concerned in it acted a part too intereſting for me to leave it out in my hiſtory.

Mademoiſelle Nina de Lizadie, of whom I am going to ſpeak, was the daughter of a gentleman of Normandy, who had ſerved with diſtinction in the army, but whoſe inconſiderate conduct

had ruined his family. He came to Paris with the hope of procuring the reverſion of a penſion he held from the king, to be continued to his wife. But ſhe, whoſe health had been deſtroyed during their domeſtic troubles, died at this time, and by her death left a lovely daughter wholly unprovided for. This unfortunate girl, after having paid the laſt duties to a beloved mother, yielded to the intreaties of her father, to come to him at Paris. She was juſt eighteen when ſhe arrived there, with an old governeſs, who was greatly attached to her. The Count de Lizadie, notwithſtanding his careleſs and imprudent conduct, could not look upon his daughter without feeling bitter remorſe at his paſt behaviour. The death of a reſpectable wife, which he reproached himſelf with having occaſioned by his own bad actions; the impoſſibility which he ſaw of being able to procure a genteel eſtabliſhment for a child whom he adored; ſtruck him ſo forcibly, that he was ready to faint with grief when he preſſed her

in

in his arms; and, in the effuſion of his heart, made her a full confeſſion of his faults, and his regret. He entreated her, mixing his tears with hers, to implore his pardon from the ſhade of her poor mother, whom he ſwore always to reſpect in the precious pledge of their union, by devoting himſelf entirely to this dear child, and for the future to employ himſelf in nothing but repairing the faults he had committed.

Mademoiſelle de Lizadie did not long enjoy the good intentions of her father. She had the misfortune to loſe him in ſix months after her arrival at Paris; and this loſs was ſo much the more afflicting, as, in the ſituation ſhe was left, ſhe had more need than ever of his ſupport and advice. A phyſician from London, who had formerly attended M. de Lizadie, and being much attached to him had viſited him as a friend, could not, at thoſe times, without admiration, obſerve the beauty and graceful demeanour of his daughter, of whom he was continually ſpeaking in all

companies. The picture which he one day drew of her in presence of a young English gentleman, the son of a nobleman who visited at the house of Madame de Lentitaire, inspired him with the greatest curiosity to see this incomparable beauty; and he immediately solicited the physician, his countyman, to introduce him; which he did the same day, presenting him to the Count de Lizadie, as a young man of quality, and his friend. The Count received him very graciously; and, in a short time, he gained the esteem of the father, and the affections of his daughter, being perfectly amiable both in mind and person. He even obtained the Count's consent to marry his daughter privately, till it was in his power to confirm the marriage according to law. These two lovers were on the eve of that day which was to crown their wishes, when a cruel and sudden illness deprived them of their tender parents. It was very soon after this fatal accident, that I became acquainted with Mademoiselle

de

de Lizadie, to whom Madame de Lentitaire had given an aſylum at her houſe. Her misfortunes, of which ſhe gave me a particular account, together with her connections with M. Harture, intereſted me greatly in her favour; and the amiable qualities ſhe poſſeſſed attached me to her from that time in the ſtricteſt friendſhip. As we were one day converſing together in the garden of Madame de Lentitaire, her friend and benefactreſs, ſhe left me for a moment to meet a ſervant who brought her a billet, and quitted her without ſpeaking a word. I knew not what to think of this meſſage, nor of the alteration I perceived in her countenance whilſt ſhe was reading this paper. When I ſaw her fall down in a fainting fit, a few paces from the place where I ſtood, I ran to her with the utmoſt anxiety; when ſhe recovered enough to ſay, though in a very weak voice, and throwing herſelf into my arms, "Oh, my dear friend, "I am ruined! read this fatal billet!"

" *To Mademoiſelle de* LIZADIE.

" DO not afflict yourſelf at my abſence, my dear and lovely friend; I am forced to obey the cruel orders of a father, who tears me from your arms. It was your name which occaſioned my falling into the ſnare laid for me. Laſt night, in coming from the Opera, about a quarter of an hour after I had ſeen you and Madame de Lentitaire go home, a man pierced through the crowd, and coming up to me ſaid, " Mademoiſelle de Lizadie, whoſe carriage is broke down a little way from hence, begs you to lend her yours to return home in." I flew to your aſſiſtance; but judge my ſurpriſe when entering the houſe this man had pointed out to me, I ſaw my father advancing towards me, who ordered me to follow him to his apartment. A clap of thunder could not have ſtruck me more. However, after the firſt emotions of ſurpriſe and grief were over, I had reſolution enough to follow, and liſten to his

orders. He told me, it was requiſite we ſhould inſtantly ſet out for England; adding, in an ironical tone, that he would acquaint me as we went along with the motives of his journey to Paris, and his ſudden departure from it. I know not what is required of me, nor with what I am accuſed; but they cannot prevent my being yours. Let what will happen, depend on my being faithful; and on my promiſes, which I now repeat, of never marrying any other but yourſelf. The hope which I have of ſeeing you ſoon again, ſoftens the miſery of my fate. Preſerve yourſelf for me, my charming friend. If I were not overwhelmed with trouble on your account, I ſhould ſuffer patiently, with the hope of happier days; but you, my lovely, my adorable friend, what will become of you! Alone—without help—without ſupport in that immenſe city! This dreadful idea would have driven me to deſpair if I had not thought of writing to Madame de Lentitaire: I have intreated her on my knees not to

abandon you; but to protect, to console you.

"A second time I am torn from your arms, my dearest friend. Ah, the cruel people! they have never loved, they have never seen you! Adieu, adieu! mistress of my heart you shall ever be, in spite of the inhuman beings who persecute me, and also the adored wife of

G. HARTURE."

After reading this letter, which pointed out to me the misfortunes of my poor friend, I could only weep with her. We both discovered that the taking away her lover was owing to some of the domestics, who had betrayed to his father the secret marriage which his son was on the point of contracting. We were deeply engaged in conversation on this dreadful event when the company joined us in the garden. My friend, in order to conceal her grief, said, she had an insupportable headach, and begged leave to retire to her chamber. I was eight

days

days without ſeeing her, but during this interval we did not fail to write to each other; our governeſſes carried our letters. In one I received from Mademoiſelle de Lizadie, ſhe told me ſhe had had a viſit from M. d'Ermancour, and that it was made her on my account. He knew my connexion with her by Madame de Lentitaire. "He is," ſaid ſhe, "greatly affected at your indif-
"ference, and in deſpair at your ſeve-
"rity, but I have not encouraged his
"hopes. The unhappy ſituation I am
"in makes me fear for you thoſe miſ-
"fortunes which the tenderneſs of my
"heart has drawn upon me. M. d'Er-
"mancour is more to be feared, as his
"paſſion is ſo ardent, ſenſible, and de-
"licate: he only aſpires to the happi-
"neſs of pleaſing you, in the hope of
"owing to no other than yourſelf the
"confeſſion of your ſentiments for him,
"and the permiſſion to apply to your
"parents for their conſent to unite him-
"ſelf with you. If he is ſo happy as to
"obtain this avowal from you, he can

"ſee

" ſee no other obſtacles to his felicity.
" The ſchemes of your grandmother
" to marry you to her nephew, like
" the reſolutions of your father to
" marry you in England, will ap-
" pear to him as trifling difficulties,
" which his love and conſtancy may
" eaſily ſurmount. Your ſentiments for
" M. d'Ermancour, and the diſlike you
" appear to have for your relation
" M. de Theadon, not to mention your
" father's intentions, make me tremble
" for you and your lover. I ſee no
" poſſibility of overcoming ſo many
" obſtacles. Conſider well, my dear
" friend, before you engage in a con-
" nexion which may lead you into the
" greateſt misfortunes: let my example
" ſerve to keep you within the ſtricteſt
" bounds of that obedience which you
" owe to your parents. See in M. Har-
" ture the unhappy example of the re-
" ſiſtance of a ſon to the will of a ſevere
" and inexorable father. It is to oblige
" him to marry a rich heireſs of Lon-
" don that he came to tear him from
" me.

" me. Our conjectures were but too " true, my dear friend; I ſhall never " ſee him more, but I ſhall never ceaſe " to love him. Alas, how dreadful is " the ſituation of my heart! Heaven " grant that you may never experience " ſuch bitter and painful griefs, as will " doubtleſs conduct your unhappy friend " to her grave."

This prudent advice, which her affairs authoriſed her to give, made a laſting impreſſion on my mind, and confirmed me in the reſolutions which I had formed, from the reflections I had made on the misfortunes of my poor friend. I then looked upon the time which we were to ſtay in the country, as a reſource which might make me forget M. d'Ermancour, whoſe influence over me I thought but ſlight; and I hoped an abſence of ſome months might change the affection which he appeared to have for me, and make him renounce all his pretenſions. In about a fortnight after, we went to this country retreat, accompanied by Mademoiſelle de Lizadie, whom my grandmother,

mother, at my ſolicitation, had invited to her eſtate, which was about twenty leagues from Paris. But M. d'Ermancour had already gained too much empire over my heart for me to renounce him voluntarily; and I had neither reſolution nor influence enough over my grandmother, to have any hopes of bringing her to abandon the ſcheme ſhe had formed, of uniting me to her nephew. The only hope I could entertain of a favourable turn in my affairs, was from time, and the advice of my friend.

It was in this ſituation of mind I arrived at the caſtle of Theadon. This place, which hitherto I had found delightful, and which really was ſo, at this time appeared to my eyes as a vaſt and frightful ſolitude, where none of the objects by which I was ſurrounded had any kind of connexion with thoſe with which my heart was ſo deeply impreſſed. What made this retreat ſtill more diſagreeable to me, was the arrival of M. de Theadon:—his preſence, and continual attentions to pleaſe me, had a quite

contrary

contrary effect on my heart and mind, to what he and my grandmother expected. He became altogether inſupportable to me when I learnt from my friend, who frequently received letters from M. d'Ermancour, that he was quite in deſpair, ſince he heard his rival was in the ſame houſe, and conſequently at liberty to converſe with me at all times, whilſt his ſad hours were ſpent in deploring the cruelty of his fate. This was nearly his expreſſion in a letter, which he concluded by entreating my friend to engage me to write a line to him immediately, only to aſſure him I had not entirely forgot him. This favour complied with, he added, would complete his felicity, and ſerve as a proof that his rival was not ſo happy as he feared. Notwithſtanding theſe preſſing ſolicitations, I did not write to M. d'Ermancour. My abſence from Paris, the ſilence I maintained, the ſuſpicions he conceived, and the fear he had leſt M. de Theadon ſhould gain my affections, at length threw him into deſpair, and his health

was

was visibly affected. M. le Marquis d'Ermancour, his father, whom business had brought to Paris, soon perceived his situation, and was greatly alarmed: he many times questioned his son, whom he adored; and by means of pressing solicitations and marks of tenderness, he gained from him a confession of his love for me, and the fears with which the views of my aunt and my father had inspired him. The Marquis tried to console him: "I know," said he, "both the "name and family of the father of your "mistress;" and after a moment's pause he said, "I know not what this man "may be whom Madame de Theadon "would make her grand-daughter "marry; but I flatter myself if M. "Mansfield has not yet formed an en-"gagement for her, who at this time is "the object of your affections, he will "pay some regard to my solicitations in "your favour; therefore keep up your "spirits, my dear son, and hope every "thing from a father who loves you."

Young

Young d'Ermancour, penetrated with gratitude, and delighted with the hopes his father had given him, embraced his knees, and in this affecting attitude his heart expreſſed its ſentiments, and he ſhed tears of the moſt lively gratitude. But whilſt they were conſidering what was beſt to be done, M. de Theadon and his aunt acted in concert, and made me blindly fall into their ſnares. In order to conduct me inſenſibly into this dilemma, my grandmother told me ſhe had found out a method to pleaſe all parties, by my marriage with her nephew. "Your "father," ſaid ſhe, "wants you near "him, and I do not chuſe to part with "you. M. de Theadon and I have "formed an arrangement which may "ſatisfy us all. He conſents to go "every year to England, and ſtay ſix "months with your father, and the "other ſix months you and he are to live "with me. I hope, my dear girl, you "will ſecond us in this ſcheme, and "join us in aſking your father's con-"ſent:" and without giving me time to

anſwer

anſwer ſhe added, "ſhe had already "written to M. Mansfield." I repreſented to her my extreme youth, and the repugnance I had to marriage. She did not attempt to combat my reaſons, but would not abandon her ſcheme.

Eight days after, ſhe renewed her entreaties: not, ſhe ſaid, to aſk me to join with her in demanding my father's conſent, which ſhe had already got in a letter ſhe ſhewed me; but begged me only not to oppoſe her wiſhes by vague and trifling reaſons.—"Conſent with a good grace, "my dear child; write to your father; "he expects only one letter from you, to "ſend me his full conſent." By this I underſtood my father would determine nothing without knowing my ſentiments, and this reſtored my ſpirits, which the beginning of the converſation had taken from me. I contrived to elude her repeated requeſts; but at length I was ſo frequently tormented by them, that I determined to complain to my father. I confeſſed the diſlike I had to M. de Theadon: I entreated him to inform me himſelf

himſelf of his own wiſhes, aſſuring him I would readily comply with them. Above a month paſſed before I received an anſwer: I was the more afflicted by the delay, as every thing ſeemed to go againſt me: I no longer heard from M. d'Ermancour; he had not written for a long time to my friend. Accuſtomed to ſee his letters, and the pleaſure I took in hearing them deſcribe ſo reſpectfully his affection for me, together with the extreme delicacy with which he expreſſed his tenderneſs, and which he only indirectly addreſſed to me, had made a deep impreſſion on my heart. I began to fear I had wearied his conſtancy, by my affected indifference, and was reproaching myſelf with this, when I received a letter from my father, which had croſſed upon the road that which I had written, to complain of the perſecutions of my grandmother. He informed me, that he had a ſecond time altered his mind, both with regard to my eſtabliſhment and his own place of reſidence; that he was diſguſted with London;

London; and that a very amiable young man, whoſe father he had known in his youth, had come to him, in order to purchaſe his eſtate near Batavia, which he meant to ſell. The young man, he added, had demanded his conſent to marry me, as one of the articles of the treaty; and he ended, by naming M. d'Ermancour as the perſon. My joy and ſurpriſe were equally great.—I could not ſee, without being much affected, the honourable and ingenuous proceedings of M. d'Ermancour, whom ſo many obſtacles had not prevented making application to my father. "Anſwer "my letter immediately," ſaid he to me; "I only wait your deciſion, to give M. "d'Ermancour the title of ſon-in-law." I wrote to my fath in a manner conformable to the ſentiments with which M. d'Ermancour had inſpired me. I acknowledged the regard I had for him, and I related to him the way I became acquainted with him. My father ſhewed my letter to M. d'Ermancour, who was enchanted with it: he then interrogated

gated my lover, on the complaints I made of my grandmother: he confeſſed he was acquainted with the ſubject, but that he did not chuſe to mention it, as he did not like to appear ſuſpicious. My father was pleaſed with his diſcretion, and eſteemed him the more for it; but was greatly diſpleaſed with his mother-in-law, who wanted to diſpoſe of his daughter without his conſent. "Her principles are very "different from mine," ſaid he to M. d'Ermancour; "I would never allow myſelf "to force the inclinations of my chil-"dren in marriage, unleſs a point of ho-"nour had obliged me to come to ſuch "an extremity; but in this caſe it is only "owing to the caprice of my mother-in-"law, and concerns her private intereſt; "and as I cannot but approve my daugh-"ter's choice, I give you my word you "ſhall be my ſon-in-law, and it makes "me very happy to give you that title be-"fore-hand." M. d'Ermancour, penetrated with the moſt lively gratitude, threw himſelf at my father's feet, who raiſed him, and at the ſame time embraced him.

him. They afterwards converſed together, and ſought out for means to reſcue me from the importunities of my mother-in-law; on this ſubject they had many meetings, the reſult of which will be ſeen in the following letter:

From M. MANSFIELD *to his* DAUGHTER.

" I PERCEIVE with concern, my dear " child, the proceedings of my mo- " ther-in-law with regard to you; but " make yourſelf eaſy, you will ſoon be " delivered from your troubles, if you " exactly follow the advice you will find " in this letter. We will ſpeak another " time of that which you tell me; as " alſo of the pain it has given me to " have neglected you ſo long. I have " paſſed, at a diſtance from you, many " days, which have been both tedious " and melancholy, and which your " company would have made agreeable: " but I wiſhed nothing to be neglected " in your education; in that I have

" ſuc-

" ſucceeded, and you have perfectly
" anſwered my expectations, and your
" grandmother's attentions. As you
" juſtly obſerve, we can only accuſe her
" of too much tenderneſs for her ne-
" phew. I greatly admire the gratitude
" and attachment you have preſerved
" for her; and ſhould blame you, had
" you acted otherwiſe: but I ſhould be
" much more diſpleaſed if, through
" weakneſs, or the goodneſs of your
" heart, you ſhould by any means ſuffer
" the ſcheme which I have formed, of
" having you with me at Batavia, to miſ-
" carry. I intend to ſpend ſome years
" there, in order to arrange the affairs
" belonging to my eſtate; which I mean
" to give you as a dowry, with the huſ-
" band your heart has made choice of.
" I already love him as my ſon, and
" wiſh he really was ſo; and doubt not
" but it will ſoon be, if you ſecond us
" in our ſchemes. This is the manner
" in which you are to conduct yourſelf;
" but above all, you muſt preſerve an
" inviolable ſecrecy, in order to avoid

"every thing that can be thought of, "to ruin our project. You will ſuffer "yourſelf to be conducted by Gouſſeau, "the honeſt man who you know is "employed on my buſineſs at Paris; "I have all the confidence in him which "he merits. I ſhall write to him to ac- "company you to Breſt, where you "will find me with M. d'Ermancour, "who conſents to go with us to "the Indies as your huſband, and "will remain there as long as our affairs "require us to ſtay. I imagine Ma- "dame Maſtrique will go with you; "and I hope you will not delay a mo- "ment to come to the arms of a "father and a huſband who are equal- "ly deſirous to ſee you. Gouſſeau will "give you whatever money you may "want."

After reading this letter, which afforded me the greateſt pleaſure, I eagerly opened that of my lover, which contained as follows:

LET-

LETTER from M. D'ERMANCOUR to Mademoiſelle MANSFIELD.

" BELOVED and beautiful Zelia, do " you approve the engagement, ſo " flattering to my heart, which M. " Mansfield has juſt contracted with " me? It is impoſſible for me to de- " ſcribe the joy I feel, or the pleaſing " ſenſations of this happy moment, when " I find myſelf preſſed to the boſom " of the father of my Zelia, whom more " than life I love. It was after reading " your letter, that he called me his ſon. " It is you who have determined him to " give me your hand, which I had de- " manded of him without your con- " ſent. You have completed my hap- " pineſs, by not condemning a ſtep " which inſpired me with a hope that I " might ſoon be bleſſed by receiving " your hand. Oh, that I was able to " ſpare you the fatigues of ſo long and " painful a journey; or at leaſt that I " could accompany you! I would have

" flown to Paris! I communicated my de-
" ſign to M. Mansfield, but he ſtopped
" at once all my entreaties, by making
" uſe of the word *decency*. How I envy
" M. Gouſſeau! How happy is he, to be
" entruſted with ſo precious a charge!
" Watch without ceaſing, dear Gouſſeau,
" over that life which is the richeſt trea-
" ſure of M. Mansfield. Remember, it is a
" beloved child, whom you have engaged
" to bring ſafely to the arms of a father
" and a lover, who live but for her.
" Expect every thing from their grati-
" tude, if you fulfil their ardent ex-
" pectations. Pardon, deareſt Zelia,
" this little digreſſion of my thoughts.
" You can only conceive a ſmall part
" of the painful anxiety in which I ſhall
" remain, till the happy moment of
" your arrival here. I ſhall count the
" days—What do I ſay?—the moments,
" which my ardour and impatience
" make appear ſo long. How delightful
" would it be to me to believe you
" would ſhorten the time as much as
" poſſible, which I would willingly cut

" off

" off from thoſe days which are allotted
" me. Generous Zelia, could you feel
" the conſequences of a day, or even of
" an hour's delay; alas, it could never
" be recovered in the number of years
" which I hope to paſs with you! But
" the courier waits, and I muſt give up
" the happineſs of converſing with you,
" to write to your amiable and unhappy
" friend, Mademoiſelle de Lizadie, to
" whom I have no good news to give.
" She will doubtleſs communicate to
" you the ſorrowful intelligence which
" I wiſh to ſpare you both; but ſhe
" muſt be acquainted with it. Alas!
" ſhe deſerves a better fate.——Adieu,
" thou beſt beloved of my heart: com-
" fort your friend, but do not afflict
" yourſelf too much on her account.
" Remember what you owe to a father,
" and above all to a lover, who only
" lives to adore you."

I pitied my dear Nina, on finding ſhe had melancholy news to learn; but my heart was ſo full of my lover, of his

tenderneſs, his delicate attentions, and every thing he had ſaid to me, that for ſome minutes I forgot my friend; ſhe had retired to an adjoining room to read her letter, and leave me at liberty to do the ſame. I preſently heard her ſigh and ſob, and ran to her; ſhe uttered a piteous cry, throwing herſelf into my arms: we remained a long time in this affecting ſituation, which ſo well expreſſes the deep ſorrow of two hearts ſo truly united.

"Read this," ſaid my unhappy friend, when her ſighs and tears gave her leave to ſpeak, preſenting to me M. d'Ermancour's letter. "See my miſery "and diſgrace: he is married, the fa- "ther of the unhappy infant I carry in "my womb is married, and I yet "live! Alas, I have no longer a "lover, a huſband: yet I carry about "me a living witneſs of my ſhame and "of my weakneſs! Cruel father! it is "you who cauſe my deſpair, and perhaps "the miſery of your ſon!"—During theſe piercing exclamations, I read as follows:

To

To Mademoiſelle NINA DE LIZADIE.

" I AM extremely grieved, Madam, " to have no ſatisfactory intelligence to " give you with regard to M. Harture. " I alſo believe he is equally to be pi- " tied: he is not permitted to ſpeak to " any one. I can aſſure you, that he " is ſtrictly guarded: I have proved it " by the many ineffectual attempts " which I have made to get to him. " But this is what a domeſtic, juſt diſ- " charged from the houſe, has told me. " I ſerved my young maſter," ſaid this " honeſt lad; " I was happy and content " with him; would to God I was there " ſtill, I would not ſuffer myſelf to be " deceived again by the treachery of " his father's valet-de-chambre. He " was the cauſe of my being diſcharged, " after ſeizing ſome letters which I was " employed to carry myſelf to Paris." I " aſked him if he knew why they kept " the young gentleman a priſoner? He " told me, they wanted to force him to

" marry a young lady, of one of the
" firſt families in England, whom he did
" not like. "It is ſaid," added he, "that
" he has at laſt conſented to the mar-
" riage, in order to gain his liberty; and
" that all the family are ſet out this night
" for an eſtate, ſome miles from Lon-
" don, which belongs to the young lady's
" father, where it is thought the mar-
" riage will be celebrated." Since this
" converſation I have received other ac-
" counts, which but too well confirm theſe
" diſagreeable conjectures. I do not how-
" ever believe that he is yet married.
" I moſt ſincerely ſympathiſe with you,
" and I lament the misfortune which has
" occaſioned your grief. I dare not
" venture to adviſe you; but I much
" wiſh the departure of Mademoi-
" ſelle Zelia may engage you to ac-
" company her. Do not deprive your-
" ſelf of ſo valuable a friend. Take
" advantage of the circumſtances which
" preſent themſelves, to depart from a
" place which can only remind you of

" your

" your affliction. I have not mentioned " it to your friend; the offer ought to " come from yourſelf: no one can or " ought to perſuade you to it. But " whatever part you take, be certain, " Madam, that I am, and ſhall ever be, " the moſt faithful and moſt reſpectful of " your friends. And with theſe aſſur- " ances I have the honour to be, &c. " &c."

I looked at my friend when I finiſhed the letter, as if to aſk her what ſhe thought of M. d'Ermancour's ſcheme. She underſtood me. " It is my only re- " ſource," ſaid ſhe, throwing herſelf into my arms; "I can only find conſolation in " the tenderneſs of my compaſſionate and " generous friend. I have not another in " the world. She alone can reſtore me to " myſelf, and enable me to ſupport a " wretched life, which I ſhould endeavour " to ſhorten if I did not hope ſoon to ſee it " terminated by the fatal wound my heart " has received, and which will never be " healed till the moment when I ſhall ex- " pire." Deeply affected with the bitter complaints of my friend, who muſt be

torn from the ſituation ſhe was then in, I could for ſome time do nothing but weep over her. The weakneſs with which ſhe had accuſed herſelf in her deſpair, the certain proofs of her diſhonour, of which I had not till then the ſmalleſt idea, intereſted me ſtill more earneſtly in her favour. I ſaid every thing to her which a tender and affectionate heart could expreſs. I endeavoured to leſſen, in her own eyes, the enormous fault of which ſhe had been guilty, and which ſhe moſt ſeverely reproached herſelf with; calling it a moſt horrible crime. At length I ſucceeded in calming the violence of her grief, and we began to make the neceſſary arrangements for the journey, in which ſhe entreated to accompany me. "Let us go, my dear friend, "let us go," ſaid ſhe, "and conceal my "ſhame in ſome far diſtant country. I "wiſh to inhabit ſome unknown deſert, "inacceſſible to all mankind." Alas, in her deſpair, ſhe ſeemed to predict what has ſince happened to us.

Four

Four days after receiving my father's letter, we found means, at break of day, to go from the caſtle without being perceived. My friend, my governeſs, and I, on foot deſcended the hill on which the caſtle de Theadon was ſituated; but, notwithſtanding my obedience to my father's orders and my attachment to M. d'Ermancour, it was with great concern I quitted this place. The idea of the pain which I ſhould give my grandmother pierced my heart. I was bathed in tears, and I turned back every moment. I wiſhed much to have returned, in order to add ſomething to a letter I had written to Madame de Theadon, and left on a table in my chamber. In it I excuſed myſelf, on the fear I had of yielding, through the attachment I had for her, to her deſire of uniting me to her nephew, whom I could never bring myſelf to love. I alleged the neceſſity I was under of obeying my father, whoſe authority I held ſacred. I entreated her to pardon us. I implored her indulgence and her bleſſing; and, although I had

ſaid every thing in this letter which my heart had dictated, I yet fancied I had not ſaid half enough, and was going back, when my governeſs, who thought by this time my letter might have reached the hands of Madame de Theadon, drew me, by the arm, and aſked me what right I had, through tenderneſs to my grandmother, that I ſhould fail in my duty to a fond father, and expoſe myſelf to the danger of ſacrificing the happineſs of my future life? My dear Nina threw herſelf at my feet, and only ſaid theſe few words: "Will you then, my dear "friend, riſque the deſtruction of your "father and your lover?" I preſſed her to my arms, leaned on her neck, and then followed her without ſaying a ſyllable; but not without ſhedding a flood of tears, and feeling the bittereſt concern. M. Gouſſeau waited in the valley with a coach. We travelled without any obſtacle, and arrived ſafely at Breſt. I found my father and my lover a few leagues from thence, whither they had come to meet me. It may be eaſily con-

conceived the exceſs of pleaſure I felt at this delightful interview; but when I was congratulating myſelf on having eſcaped the purſuits of my grandmother, and reſiſted the entreaties of M. de Theadon, I learnt that they had followed me, and that they both arrived at Breſt directly after us. My aſtoniſhment and my fears were extreme. They had been much amazed to find me abſent at dinner, and M. de Theadon went himſelf to my dreſſing-room to know what could detain me. The letter which lay on the table met his eye, and he carried it immediately to his aunt, who, finding I was going to ſeek my father in order to avoid the marriage which ſhe had projected, inſtantly determined to follow me. She had hoped to overtake me in time to prevent my embarking for England, or elſe to follow me thither with her nephew, if ſhe could not prevail on me to return back. But their ſurpriſe was equal to mine when they found I was with my father and M. d'Ermancour. The aſſiduities of the latter, at

the houſe of Madame de Lentitaire, had made M. de Theadon ſuſpect he was his rival. He trembled with rage and deſpair, threatened heaven and earth, and, for many hours, thought of nothing but how to revenge himſelf. My grandmother, though leſs furious, was equally angry at this rencontre; but as ſhe was more prudent and wiſe, ſhe made it her firſt care to calm her nephew. This we learnt from a ſervant who had attended me at the houſe of Madame de Theadon, and who came in the evening to ſpeak to my governeſs. The threats of M. de Theadon diſtreſſed me greatly; M. d'Ermancour heard the account of them with the greateſt coolneſs imaginable; but I was not the leſs apprehenſive that a time might come, when he would not be able to preſerve the tranquillity which he now ſhewed. "My ſon," ſaid my father to him, with great dignity and ſenſibility, "avoid coming to any extre-
"mities, and let us endeavour to com-
"promiſe with the near relation of the
"wife I deſign to give you; this is my
"ſtrict command." I was not able to ſleep

all

all that night; but the next day we learnt that M. and Madame de Theadon were gone; my ſpirits recovered, and my father was wholly taken up with the preparation for our wedding. I ſpent a happy day: M. d'Ermancour was at my feet, overwhelmed with joy, and only left me to go and ſeek the notary and the prieſt, who demanded a diſpenſation from M. the Biſhop of St. Paul de Leon. The faithful Gouſſeau was diſpatched for it; but, what was our grief, when, inſtead of his return, we received a letter from him, which he ſent by an expreſs to my father, and which contained as follows:

"SIR,

"I entreat you not to loſe a moment "in carrying away Mademoiſelle Zelia. "I found at this place M. and Madame "de Theadon, who had repreſented to "M. the biſhop, that you intended tak-"ing Mademoiſelle out of the kingdom, "after ſhe had been bred up in the ca-"tholic religion, which her mother

"professed; and that you, who are a
"Protestant, prefer carrying her into
"those countries where her faith would
"be in danger. In consequence of this
"they have petitioned the king for an
"order to retain her in France. It is
"said the bishop has many of these or-
"ders in his disposal, and, if you do
"not depart immediately, you will per-
"haps see Mademoiselle taken away
"before your own eyes."

My father did not hesitate a moment; he gave up his intentions of marrying us in Europe, and we embarked in a small vessel in order to reach an East India ship, which was then in the harbour, ready to set sail. I did not recover my spirits till I had lost sight of the shore, where I had been in dread of M. de Theadon and his aunt's reproaches; but when I saw myself safe from their pursuits, and surrounded by all those who were most dear to me, I gave myself up to joy; notwithstanding which, whilst I congratulated myself on the happy

happy ſituation I was in, I could not reflect without concern on the melancholy ſtate in which I had left my grandmother. I forgot all her ſchemes ſo contrary to my wiſhes, and, attributing them only to her partiality for her nephew, I really pitied her, and could not help ſhedding tears as I caſt my eyes on the coaſt, which was diſappearing from our ſight, and ſeemed to take away all my hopes of ever ſeeing her again. I could not avoid reproaching myſelf for the cruel neceſſity I was under of going away without taking leave of her; but when I called to mind every thing which concerned my father, my lover, and myſelf, I found even at the ſame moment how neceſſary our precipitate flight had been, and I had now nothing to think on but the delightful pleaſure of partaking the joy and felicity of the beſt of fathers and the moſt affectionate of lovers. My friend alſo ſeemed to have ſuſpended, if not forgot, her ſorrows. My father talked of nothing but the pleaſure he promiſed himſelf on approaching Batavia,

and

and having our marriage celebrated there without any difficulty or trouble. In ſhort, every thing appeared to favour us at the time when we were on the point of the moſt dreadful cataſtrophe. The whole ſhip's crew were now in the midſt of their joy that land had been diſcovered, and that we were arrived at the heights of Sumatra, without having had any contrary winds, when all at once a violent ſtorm aroſe which carried away our maſts and ſails. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the horrors of this moment; the ſcreams of ſo many people, the tumult, the deſpair, and the ſlaughter which followed. This horrid ſpectacle was only made viſible to us by the burſts of lightning which flew over our heads. Alas! I ſcarcely received the laſt adieus of my father, my lover, and my friend. I was fainting in their arms, when a dreadful wave daſhed the ſhip on a point of a rock, and ſeparated me from them. I have often endeavoured, though in vain, to recollect the circumſtances of this dreadful ſhipwreck, in which

which I was driven, almoſt lifeleſs, on that fatal rock, where I found myſelf as if coming out of a dream. I firſt looked at the different objects I ſaw, without diſtinguiſhing them, notwithſtanding it was now day-light; but, by degrees, I recovered my ſenſes, and ſaw all the horror of my ſituation. The danger which I had avoided appeared preferable to that to which I found myſelf expoſed; I envied the fate of my friends, whom the tempeſt had buried under the waters: the next moment I ſhuddered at the kind of death to which I had ſeen them ready to ſubmit. I thought I heard ſtill reſounding in my ears, the ſad and plaintive cries of M. d'Ermancour, who ſuffered more for my diſtreſſes than his own: I ſaw him ſtill endeavouring to give me hopes of eſcaping from the danger, which, though he himſelf thought inevitable, he ſtill wiſhed to conceal from me to the laſt moment. Alas! I ſaw like him that fatal moment which was to ſeparate us; but I did not foreſee that deſtiny had reſerved me for ſtill

greater

greater evils, in preſerving an inſupportable life, which deſpair, at the thoughts of being abandoned, would have inclined me to ſhorten, in order to be re-united to my friends. Theſe ſad reflections drew from me the moſt bitter complaints on my fate; I reproached heaven for my deplorable exiſtence; I accuſed it of injuſtice to my friends, who merited a better fate. I was ſtill in the utmoſt deſpair, when I heard at a ſmall diſtance ſome plaintive cries which terrified my heart. I ſuddenly aroſe from the place where I had reſted many hours, without being able to change my ſituation, ſo much was I hurt and bruiſed by the ſhocks of the veſſel. The idea of my preſervation, that ſentiment ſo natural, which we feel mechanically, was the only one which affected me at this time, and which made me recover my almoſt loſt ſtrength. I was afterwards touched with compaſſion for the ſuffering being whoſe cries I had heard. I deſcended from the rock, and advanced towards a wood, with a fearful and tottering

tering ſtep, caſting my eyes with dread on every object which ſurrounded me. But the ſame ſentiment of fear which I experienced had made the afflicted perſon fly at the firſt noiſe I made in walking in the wood to find out what it was. After looking about for ſome time, I fancied the voice and complaints I had heard were only the effects of my troubled imagination, which every where preſented me with wretchedneſs. I was fully perſuaded of this illuſion, when I perceived, in a thick part of the wood, a few paces from where I was, the ruſtling of the buſhes, and heard a noiſe. I advanced trembling, and thought I ſaw through the branches a perſon of my own ſex. This gave me courage, and I approached, ſaying ſomething to calm the fears of her whom I ſaw ready to eſcape from me again: "Ah, whoever "you are," ſaid I, in the moſt melancholy and ſupplicating tone, "let me "implore your protection."—"What "do I hear!" cried the poor Lizardie, whom at that moment I diſcovered.

"What,

"What, is it you?" ſaid ſhe, running to throw herſelf into my arms. "Is it my "friend from whom I flew?" I was ſo much aſtoniſhed and affected in preſſing her to my boſom, that I could only expreſs my joy by ſighs and tears. My mind was ſo agitated by this happy meeting, which in an inſtant inſpired me with ſtill more pleaſing hopes, that I fell at her feet, nearly deprived of my ſenſes. "Return to me," ſaid I, "my father, my "lover!" Vainly did I expect my friend to reſtore them both to me. "Ah, why," ſaid I, "are they not ſaved from ſhip-"wreck as well as we are? Perhaps "they may be now in ſome part of this "foreſt, employed in lamenting our "fate as we are theirs. Come, my dear "friend, let us run to their aſſiſtance. "Ah, if heaven has preſerved them to "me, my whole life will not ſufficiently "prove my gratitude." But our ſearches came to nothing; our cries were uſeleſs, and all nature remained ſilent about us. We ſat down, oppreſſed with fatigue, and exhauſted with hunger. The dread-

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ful paleneſs which I remarked in the countenance of my friend, her almoſt cloſed eyes, ſhewed me the neceſſity I was under to ſeek for ſomething to recruit her ſtrength and ſpirits. In traverſing the foreſt I had obſerved ſome trees loaded with fruits, which, though I was unacquainted with them, appeared good to eat. I went to fetch them, and after taſting one myſelf, gave her ſome. Though they were inſipid, we both found ourſelves refreſhed, and I was charmed with this diſcovery, as it gave me the hope of being able to preſerve the life of my friend, which was dearer to me than my own: in ſhort, I could not have ſupported mine, but with the view of watching over hers, and attending to the ſafety of the unhappy being ſhe carried in her womb. On her part, ſhe had no deſire to live, but that ſhe would not leave me alone, abandoned to deſpair. But ſpite of theſe reciprocal proteſtations, which our hearts proved the ſincerity of, we had no other reſource in our afflictions, than by the hope of

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terminating our wretched exiſtence. The cold of the night coming on reminded us, that we muſt ſearch for a place of ſhelter to guard us from it, and defend us againſt wild beaſts or ſavages, whom we equally dreaded. By ſearching about we perceived a hollow and deep rock, in which we fixed to paſs the night. What a night for two innocent and weak creatures, accuſtomed to every convenience of life, as well as to every poſſible care and attention that could be paid them, but who now found themſelves in a ſtate even more dreadful than death, which was continually preſent to them, in the kind of tomb into which they retired! The horrid ſilence of the night concurred to render it inſupportable to us; the ſmalleſt noiſe terrified us. The howling of wild beaſts, who ſeemed diſputing over ſome helpleſs victim, penetrated us with horror and inſpired our compaſſion. But, imagine what we felt, when we heard ſomething walking round our retreat! the beating of my heart was extreme, and that of my unhappy

happy friend was ſo violent, that ſhe fell almoſt ſenſeleſs into my arms. I tried to comfort her; when I perceived a large animal ready to enter the place we were in. I gave a loud ſcream, which ſent him away. But we were not eaſily recovered from the terror he had occaſioned. He was far off; but I thought him ſtill near enough to throw himſelf on us and devour us. My diſturbed imagination painted this cruel and bloody ſcene in all its horror. I held my friend ſtill in my arms, when a freſh noiſe made us precipitately quit our retreat, which appeared more dangerous than flying to the midſt of the wood. When we had gained a little more tranquillity, we conſidered the danger we had juſt eſcaped, and concluded that the cavern to which we had retired was the uſual habitation of the animal which had ſo terrified us. We from that time carefully avoided theſe dangerous places, without however finding any other reſource to ſhelter us from the night. I dared not communicate to my friend what I

thought of our wretched ſituation. Her thoughts ſhe alſo concealed; but when either of us appeared to deſpair, we mutually endeavoured to conſole each other. "Heaven," ſaid I, "my dear friend, "will not forſake us; let us implore its "clemency, and let us not be without "hope of ſome conſolation from the divine "goodneſs.—I requeſt it for my friend," added I ſometimes when I ſaw her deſpairing.——"Conſole this dear com-"panion of my miſery, whom I have "drawn into this ſad fate.——Aſſiſt me, "great God, to render her ſituation leſs "painful.——Preſerve her for me, in "order to make mine more eaſy!"

Theſe effuſions of my heart ſoftened for a time the bitterneſs of her grief. She entreated me with uplifted hands not to add to my wretchedneſs by the idea of having contributed to her unhappy deſtiny. She aſſured me ſhe ſuffered more on my account than her own. That the grievous lamentations I ſometimes made in ſo piteous a manner, affected her much more than her own misfortunes; and

that

that I ſhould ſoon ſee her more tranquil, were I ſo myſelf.

Two days and nights had now paſſed, without our having found a ſafe and convenient place to retire to: but Heaven watched over us, and inſpired us with the idea of going farther into the foreſt than we had yet ventured to do, leſt we ſhould loſe ſight of the ſea-ſhore, which ſerved ſometimes to recruit our ſpirits, by flattering us with ſome happy diſcovery. I could neither quit theſe fatal ſhores, nor turn my eyes from them, which were always fixed on the diſmal ſpot where our ſhip was loſt. The rock on which it ſplit pointed out to me the frightful gulf, that my eager eyes ſought to penetrate, and at the bottom of which, I trembled leſt I ſhould diſcover the precious remains of my father and lover. My heart was torn in pieces, and my face bathed in tears: but the repeated entreaties of my unhappy companion at length drew me, in ſpite of myſelf, away from the ſhore. "Come, my dear

" friend," ſaid ſhe to me one morning, perceiving I was preparing to return to the banks of the ſea, " let " us ſeek an aſylum more convenient " and leſs ſolitary than this frightful " ſhore, which can only be inhabited " by ſavage and cruel animals. What " have we to riſque?" added ſhe, ſeeing I heſitated to follow her; " we can- " not be worſe off than we are, and we " may hope to be better!" It was not without difficulty I determined to follow her advice. I ſaw a thouſand dangers we had to fear, much greater than thoſe which we wiſhed to avoid. I endeavoured to convince my friend of it, but ſhe perſiſted in her deſign; to which I at length conſented, after having made her promiſe that we ſhould not go a great way from the ſea-ſhore. We ſet out at the firſt break of day; but I ſhed a torrent of tears in quitting theſe banks, where I thought I left a part of myſelf. This dear companion of my miſery, to whom I imparted my regret, and who from time to time ſaw me caſt my eyes

on

on the melancholy place which I quitted ſo reluctantly—this dear friend fixed my attention and hopes on the ſide of the foreſt we were going over. "If," ſaid ſhe, "our friends are ſaved from ſhip-"wreck, we may believe that they will, "like us, ſeek the moſt convenient part "of the foreſt, and perhaps find ſome "ſafe place, which we may be able to "diſcover." This comfortable idea raiſed my ſpirits, and gave me freſh hopes. As we went forward, without diſcovering the ſmalleſt trace of what we were in ſearch of, we talked of the pleaſure we ſhould all enjoy in being re-united together in this foreſt, even were we obliged to ſpend our lives there. Alas! I ſhould not have wiſhed a greater felicity. It was alſo the earneſt deſire of my dear companion, who thought ſhe could never appear again in the world, and conſequently had no wiſh but to conceal her ſhame in this Deſert, where, by the goodneſs of her friends, ſhe might yet enjoy ſome tranquillity. The day was almoſt ſpent, and our hopes with it,

when we arrived at a corner of the foreſt, which appeared cultivated with great care, with ſtraight and beaten paths, and here and there a ſmall arbour, formed of the boughs of trees, which, with graſs trodden down, pointed out to us the habitation of ſome domeſtic animals whoſe maſters could not be far off. This diſcovery made us ſtop. "It is cer-
"tain," ſaid we, "that there are ſome
"of the human race here; but as we
"know not their nature, we ſhould
"run too great a riſk to venture our-
"ſelves among them, without know-
"ing what they are. Let us," ſaid I to my friend, "retire to a little diſtance,
"into the thickeſt part of the wood,
"from whence we can obſerve them
"without being ſeen." We were preparing to go, when we ſaw a beautiful ſheep approach us, which at firſt appeared quite familiar; but which immediately ran more haſtily back again as ſoon as we attempted to careſs it. My companion followed it, and I walked ſlowly behind her, charging her not to

expoſe

expoſe herſelf too much. Her curioſity drew her on, and for ſome moments I loſt ſight of her, which appeared to me as many hours in the uncertainty I was in. I went on trembling, when I ſaw her appear again, and come towards me, making ſigns of wonder at what ſhe had diſcovered. "We have nothing to fear, "my dear friend," ſaid ſhe, addreſſing me. "This neat and pleaſant habita-"tion which you are going to ſee can-"not inſpire any terror, and ſtill leſs the "maſter who inhabits it. He appears "bent under the weight of years. I "perceived it on his entering into his "houſe, followed by the ſheep which we "wou.d have taken notice of." I gained courage, and was immediately determined. "Let us go," my dear friend, ſaid I, leading her by the arm, "let us "ſee this old hermit, he will doubtleſs "treat us with hoſpitality. Ah, if he "could give us any good news! If my "father and my lover have met with this "aſylum!—But ſo great a favour would "be a gift from Heaven, with which I

" dare not flatter myſelf!" I was ſtruck with the appearance of regularity which I obſerved in the place. It was a pretty large piece of ground, ſurrounded by a fence of tall pomegranate trees. The houſe was at one end, and at the other were many little places built up to contain birds of all kinds. There was alſo a moſt beautiful garden on this ſpot of ground, planted with all the beſt fruit-trees of Europe, and producing all ſorts of vegetables. I admired every thing I ſaw; and my aſtoniſhment increaſed as I entered the houſe. A very pretty dog barked at our approach; when his maſter, who had ſeen us coming, took hold of him and tied him up. The ſight of his maſter, with his long beard, terrified me more than the dog's barking: nevertheleſs, the kind reception he gave us ſoon diminiſhed our fears. After the firſt emotions of ſurpriſe and terror were over, the good old man aſked us very politely, By what chance we found ourſelves in ſo ſavage a place? " It was a " moſt fatal ſhipwreck," ſaid I, " which

" threw

" threw us on this coaſt." And then I aſked him with great eagerneſs, If he had not ſeen other perſons, who had eſcaped from the ſame danger? Unhappily for me, he had not; nor had he any knowledge of this dreadful cataſtrophe. He expreſſed great concern at not having heard of this fatal event, as he aſſured us he would have run to the aſſiſtance of his countrymen. " For, ladies," ſaid he, " I am a native of France as well as " yourſelves, and conſequently am moſt " happy I have it in my power to " offer you all that I poſſeſs." We were deeply affected with his kind offers, and the gracious manner in which he made them; and endeavoured to teſtify our gratitude, by almoſt throwing ourſelves at his feet to thank him. I entreated him to take us under his protection, and to give us ſome retired corner of his dwelling, where we might remain in ſafety, and not incommode him.

" Be not afraid," ſaid he; " nothing " in the world ſhall interrupt your tran- " quillity while you remain here; look

" upon yourſelves from this moment as " miſtreſſes of this habitation. Chuſe " one of thoſe chambers that you ſee, " and arrange yourſelves as conveniently " as you can." We took the inner apartment at his ſolicitation, and after having made a little repaſt of ſtrawberries and dried grapes, we retired to it. Every thing I ſaw in this chamber appeared to me like enchantment. I not only obſerved furniture of every kind and of good faſhion, but all ſorts of apparel fit for womens uſe. I expreſſed my ſurpriſe at it; which the good old man put a ſtop to, by telling me, theſe cloaths were all that was left him of a lovely wife who were loſt in returning to France. My friend aſked him, if ſhe had lived here with him, and what reaſon he had for fixing here? But he deferred anſwering her queſtion to another time, when he would relate his hiſtory more at leiſure. He then left us, deſiring us to make uſe of the apparel. My friend, who felt more than me the neceſſity of ſuch aſſiſtance, embraced me, to teſtify her

her joy: I ſhared in her ſatisfaction, and applauded myſelf for having taken her advice. We agreed that it was neceſſary to acquaint the good hermit with her ſituation, and that we ſhould tell him ſhe loſt her huſband in the ſhipwreck. Our tears had already convinced him that we wept for all that was moſt dear to us in the world. He had given us hopes that we might one day recover thoſe friends whom we ſo much regretted; either in the Deſert, where they might have ſaved themſelves as we did, or on the inhabited ſide of the coaſt, which they might have reached by means of a boat, or even part of the wreck. "Some chance," ſaid he, "I "think you may have of ſeeing them "again." As he had not then explained himſelf how he foreſaw this might happen, I thought it long till I ſaw him again to inform myſelf more particularly; but it was impoſſible before night to obtain any thing from him. He was ſo fully employed, and ſo punctual in all thoſe duties and attentions which he had

impoſed on himſelf, that he would not one minute delay the time he had fixed for the different occupations of each day. He had by this means rendered every moment of his life agreeable to him, and was able to ſay, which he repeated many times to us, that he never found himſelf tired. And this is not to be wondered at, when it is known what this good old man had procured for himſelf by his extreme induſtry, even things that are found with difficulty in the greateſt ſocieties, ſuch as poultry, game, eggs, milk, butter, and cheeſe, the laſt of which he knew how to make exceedingly good. It is eaſy to believe that one ſingle man muſt be fully employed in bringing up ſo many animals, in ſowing the grain, grinding it, and making bread; and it would aſtoniſh any one, as well as me, that he was able to accompliſh it.

At length the hour of ſupper arrived, when my friend and I might again run over all the wonders of this habitation. We found, on entering the houſe, the table

table was ſerved with ſo much order that our admiration increaſed, and conſequently our curioſity, to learn the hiſtory of our hoſt, which he related to us during our repaſt. "I will not tire "you, ladies," ſaid he, "with the "whole hiſtory of my life, it would be "too long, and thoſe particulars of it "which I ſuppreſs are of no conſe-"quence. Allow me, therefore, in few "words to tell you, that I was born in "France. The deſire of travelling "made me quit my own country very "young, and chance conducted me to "the Indies, where, in a ſhort time, I "made a fortune. I returned from "thence in a ſhip which belonged to "me, and was loaded with riches, and "a much more valuable treaſure, which "I received from Love itſelf: Alas, "cruel fate has robbed me of her! "Forgive my weakneſs," ſaid the good old man; "the recollection of "what remains to acquaint you with "will draw the tears from my eyes. I "was accompanied by a lovely girl

"whom

" whom I adored, and who had quitted
" her family and a conſiderable fortune
" to follow me. We hoped to be unit-
" ed by the ties of marriage as ſoon as
" we arrived in France; and this idea
" conſtituted our felicity. In the mean
" time we enjoyed the pleaſure of ſeeing
" each other, and reciprocally telling
" each other we loved. I never ceaſed
" repeating it; yet I thought I never
" ſaid enough. A contrary wind
" obliged us to ſtop on the banks of this
" iſland. My beloved companion was
" not well; ſhe thought, if ſhe came on
" ſhore ſhe ſhould recover immediately;
" we did ſo, and came into this foreſt,
" where I ordered tents to be raiſed in
" the place where you now ſee me. I
" had a part of the cargo brought to me,
" that we might be better able to wait
" for a fair wind. But the illneſs of this
" lovely creature increaſed, and ſhe died
" at the end of three days. I was every
" thing but dead with grief; and from
" that day vowed never to be another's.
" I ſwore it, as I embraced her for the
" laſt

" laſt time; and, to keep this oath, I
" made another, to paſs the remainder of
" my life in this iſland, and to conſecrate
" every moment of it to her. I had her
" embalmed, and ſhe is yet actually pre-
" ſerved in a rock, which I had hollow-
" ed, and which you may ſee whenever
" you chuſe. I go thither every morn-
" ing and evening; and this has at-
" tached me to the place theſe twenty
" years. With regard to the eſtabliſhment
" which ſo aſtoniſhes you, it is only the
" conſequence of what I have juſt told
" you. Having formed the deſign of
" ſpending the reſt of my days in this
" Deſert, I wiſhed to have all the con-
" veniencies of life, and I made uſe of
" my riches to procure them. Among
" all the people on board my ſhip, there
" only remained with me a ſervant,
" who was much attached to me, and
" whom I kept about three years; he
" died at the end of that time, after
" having laboured hard in the embel-
" liſhing this place, with other work-
" men whom I had ſent for from Ba-
" tavia;

" tavia; and, by the ſame ſhip, I had " all ſorts of animals, and the furniture " which you ſee, brought me. I de- " tained the veſſel till I had purchaſed " every thing neceſſary, that I might " have no further occaſion for com- " merce with mankind. I then gave up " the ſhip to one of my people, on con- " dition that he ſhould in future furniſh " me with every thing I might have oc- " caſion for."—I could not help inter- rupting the good man, to aſk him if he had ſtill any connection with this per- ſon?—" No," ſaid he, " I have had " none theſe ten years; therefore I think " he is either dead, or retired from buſi- " neſs, after having made a fortune by " his commerce in the Eaſt Indies."— " You have doubtleſs other methods," ſaid I, " of procuring, either from Eu- " rope or Aſia, all thoſe uſeful and con- " venient articles which we ſee here, " and which muſt want renewing." I added, without waiting his reply, that I judged ſo, by the hope he had given us of being able, ſome time or other, to find

find again thoſe perſons we ſo much regretted. But I found by his anſwer he had no correſpondence with any one ſince the loſs of the Captain to whom he had given up his ſhip; and that he could only give us vague and uncertain hopes for our deliverance. This converſation, which I had ſo much deſired in the hope of finding it favourable to my wiſhes, on the contrary, threw every reſource with which I had flattered myſelf to the greateſt diſtance, and renewed all my griefs. The good hermit perceived it, and ſaid every thing he thought capable of conſoling me. He aſſured me, that many times ſince his Captain had omitted coming to him, he had ſeen ſhips which had ſtopped on theſe ſhores in order to take in water, and that one of them had paſſed by there about two years before which came from Batavia, and whoſe captain had loſt himſelf in hunting in the wood; that he had received him into his habitation, and had the pleaſure afterwards to put him in the way to find his ſhip, which had waited three days for a

favourable wind. He added, that probably he might not have obſerved others, which ſince then might have paſſed that way; but he promiſed that for the future he would carefully watch all thoſe which might arrive on that ſhore, and that he would inſtantly give us intelligence. He then gave us ſome ideas which were very pleaſing to me and my friend: "I ſhould not be at all "ſurpriſed," ſaid he, "if the greateſt "part of the ſhip's company ſhould "have eſcaped ſhipwreck. It ſeldom "happens that ſo many people periſh on "ſuch occaſions. It is not unlikely "that the perſons you ſo much regret, "may have found their way to Batavia. "I hope that you will one day or other "join them again, by means of that "good fortune which perhaps may over-"take you ſooner than you think for." Theſe poſſibilities, which this good man himſelf had but little dependance on, and which he only ſaid to comfort me, had their effect: I eagerly ſeized on every gleam of hope they afforded me,

and

and retired with a degree of ſatisfaction, which the opinion of my friend ſtill increaſed. I was then poſſeſſed of ſome hope, which was a great point gained; and was waiting for a happy turn in my affairs, under the protection of a man who afforded us every poſſible convenience of life. But, notwithſtanding this abatement of my troubles, I was not leſs anxious for the ſafety of my father and my lover. I ſaw days, and even months, paſs on without hearing any news of them. I went every day with my friend to the ſea-ſhore; but my eager eyes could diſcern no other object on this fatal element, but rocks, and the loſs of what I moſt loved. Theſe ſad ideas made my tears flow, which I took great care to conceal from my friend. I alſo affected to be much more eaſy than I really was at her ſituation. I looked forward with dread to the time of her delivery: it made me tremble for us both; and I was ſometimes aſtoniſhed to ſee her ſo cheerful, even at the eve almoſt of ſo dangerous and painful an event.

event. One day I congratulated her on it, and encouraged her to preſerve this way of thinking, which gave even to me a greater degree of courage to ſupport the dreaded moment; when I perceived her eyes ſwimming in tears, which ſhe endeavoured to hide. "We no "longer fear when we have nothing "more to loſe," ſaid ſhe. This affecting anſwer, which I did not expect, pierced my heart, and I could not diſſemble the chagrin I felt at the indifference ſhe had diſcovered for a life ſo dear to me. I wept, and complained of the little intereſt I had with her, inſtead of praiſing her for not appearing to dread her approaching labour. I blamed the motives which had given her that appearance of eaſe, which I had till then ſo much admired; but I gained no advantage over her mind. The dreadful ſtroke was given, and ſhe ſaid, laying her hand on her heart, "The dart is here, "and nothing can remove it! I have "ſacrificed my life in quitting my "country, where I could no longer

"exiſt

" exiſt without ſhame! I am torn from
" what my heart held moſt dear! Alas!
" perhaps the father of my infant might
" one day have been reſtored to me! I
" have preferred death to ignominy; to
" the fatal neceſſity of loving the huſ-
" band of my rival. I would not for a
" moment haſten the time which is to
" end my troubles. But if the hopes
" which the good hermit has given are
" not vain, if I could once ſee you de-
" part from hence, nothing then would
" attach me to life."——" What! you
" would abandon me," ſaid I to her,
" you would allow me to go alone?
" And this infant alſo, to which you
" are ſo ſoon to give birth, you would
" abandon that alſo?"——" Alas," ſaid
ſhe, " I am ſo unhappy, that the tender
" name of *mother*, which ought to be
" my joy and happineſs, is to me an
" opprobrious term. I ſhould bluſh at
" the ſight of my child; when the unfor-
" tunate creature ſhould aſk me the
" name of its father, its ſhame would
" increaſe mine. The ſingle idea that

" this

" this unhappy infant might one day re-
" proach me with its birth, would
" make me ſtay in the midſt of a foreſt
" infinitely more deſolate than this we
" now inhabit. I ſhould prefer ſuch a
" miſerable ſituation, rather than expoſe
" myſelf to public cenſure; to the con-
" tempt of thoſe who would learn my
" hiſtory, and the ill-natured curioſity
" of thoſe who would ſeek to diſcover
" it.

" Do not blame me," ſaid ſhe, wiping away her tears, which ſhe could not reſtrain on ſeeing me weep: " Do not
" blame me for the reſolution I have
" taken, of continuing here the remainder
" of a life which may not be long. Alas,
" I only wiſh to prolong it to the day of
" your deliverance." " Theſe then are
" your ſchemes," ſaid I, " my dear
" friend, to deſpair, and to die! You
" intereſt yourſelf, you ſay, in my fate.
" You wiſh me a happineſs which per-
" haps I may never enjoy, and yet you
" deſire our ſeparation. Could you only
" imagine the deplorable ſituation I
" ſhould

" ſhould be in, if I had the miſery to loſe
" you! You would only finiſh your
" own misfortunes; and this it is which
" which makes you wiſh for death?——
" Ah, my dear friend, conſider my fate;
" does it differ from yours? Have not I
" alſo loſt, as well as you, all that is
" dear to me? Am I not doomed,
" notwithſtanding the trifling hopes
" which are given me, to ſpend my life
" in this Deſert, ignorant of all that
" paſſes in the world? I have no re-
" ſource, no conſolation, but in your
" friendſhip. Live then, my dear
" friend, for the unfortunate being to
" whom you owe the preſervation of
" your life: live for your friend. Do
" not ſeek to aggravate your troubles
" by unjuſt reproaches." " I am con-
tent," ſaid ſhe, throwing herſelf into my
rms, " ſince I ſtill poſſeſs the eſteem of
" my virtuous friend." " What, had
" you any doubt of it?" ſaid I, preſſing
r to my boſom. " Have you ever had
" any ſuch ſuſpicions of me, my dear
" Lizardie, who honour you, and who

" have

" have never ſeen without admiration
" your prudent conduct towards the man
" who is the preſent cauſe of your re-
" gret? No, I ſhall never forget with
" what greatneſs of ſoul you have juſ-
" tified him on account of your ſepara-
" tion. Where is the woman equally
" generous and noble, not to permit
" herſelf to utter reproaches, either
" ill or well founded. You have made
" none; as a tender lover, you have
" reſpected the father of your infant,
" the choſen of your heart; but you
" have condemned yourſelf. Reſtore to
" yourſelf, my dear friend, that eſteem
" which no mortal would refuſe you,
" did they know, as I do, the purity of
" your heart. My deareſt friend," ſaid
I, preſſing one of her hands, " ſwear
" with me, we will never ſeparate.
" Something may happen. We may
" never perhaps have it in our power to
" chuſe; but if it was ever propoſed to
" me to return into the world without you,
" if I could not prevail on you to leave
" this Deſert, where you have fixed a
" reſo-

" reſolution to end your days, I would " never go from you. My deſtiny ſhall " be wholly connected with yours. Re- " gulate yourſelf accordingly, my dear " friend, either to leſſen or to aggravate " the miſery of my fate." It was in this manner I ſpoke to the amiable and tender Lizardie, when M. de Mericourt, which was the name of our hermit, came to tell us dinner was ready. I thought I remarked, during our meal, more tranquillity on the countenance of my friend. She appeared alſo to take more intereſt than uſual in the converſation. She ſeemed even to redouble her attentions to me, and her ſpirits ſeemed to gain new ſtrength. I was delighted with this change, when one morning, as ſhe was dreſſing, ſhe increaſed my pleaſure, by telling me, that ſhe now perceived, without repugnance, the moment approach that was to make her a mother; that I had changed her heart by my generous way of thinking towards her, and that my eſteem for her, and the tender attachment I had ſhewn her in my laſt

converſation with her, had, if ſhe might ſo call it, given her a new exiſtence, in making her neceſſary to my happineſs. She ſaid alſo, as a proof of her gratitude, ſhe would begin from this time to attend to the preſervation of her health, in order to prolong her life, which ſhould in future be wholly conſecrated to me. "I have then gained my tender, my "faithful friend," ſaid I; preſſing her in my arms. Whether it was from the effects of her emotion, or that the time of her delivery was come, ſhe gave a piercing cry whilſt I held her ſtill in my arms, and very ſoon after brought into the world a lovely little girl.

At this time I was ſixteen, and my friend nearly eighteen years old; but, notwithſtanding her youth, ſhe ſuffered with the moſt heroic courage. I did my beſt in taking care of the mother and her infant, and then went to ſeek our hermit, to inform him of this event, which gave him great pleaſure, as he had already formed a friendſhip for us both. He regarded us as his children,

and

and treated us as ſuch. "God be praiſ-
"ed," ſaid he, as he returned with me to the houſe, "I ſhall have a third
"daughter! I hope ſhe will be a com-
"fort to her mother and you; but let
"us haſten to aſſure her own happi-
"neſs by a holy ceremony." He ſerved both as prieſt and godfather. I was the godmother, and we named the child Ninette, after her mother, who called herſelf Nina. I had not yet preſented the infant to her mother, fearing the ſight of her might have ſome dangerous effects; but ſhe demanded inſtantly to ſee her child, after having thanked the good old man and me for the important ſervice we had rendered her. How ſhall I deſcribe the affecting ſcene exhibited by this tender and unfortunate mother on receiving her infant in her arms, or the ſenſation I felt at my heart in ſeeing her tears bathe the face of the poor little infant. She examined its delicate features in order to trace out thoſe of its father. I was on my knees, leaning on her bed, whilſt ſhe was thus employed, and every now

and then ſhe caſt an animated and affectionate look at me. The good hermit ſat in a corner of the room, where, with tears in his eyes, he bleſſed the objects who engaged his attention. "Alas!" ſaid this unfortunate mother, returning to me the precious proof of her tenderneſs, "why "cannot I place this dear infant in the "hands of her father! Never," ſaid ſhe, making a ſad and plaintive exclamation, "never ſhall I have that conſo-"lation. I ſhall never behold this in-"nocent ſmile at the tender careſſes of "her father. I ſhall never hear her "called by that appellation ſo dear to "the heart of a mother." A ſhower of tears and ſighs ended theſe bitter complaints ſo painful to my heart, already ſo deeply afflicted. I was obliged to go into the next chamber, in order to weep freely on our deſtiny. I deplored her ſituation and my own, when the good old man came to tell me my unhappy friend had fainted away. I ran haſtily to her, and, by means of ſome drops, we had the ſatisfaction to ſee her recover

ſoon.

ſoon. She grew calm by degrees, and aſked us a thouſand pardons for the trouble ſhe had given us. She promiſed in future to reſtrain her grief; but ſhe was not leſs affected by it in her heart. She, however, recovered her health tolerably well, though ſhe grew very thin, which I attributed to her nurſing her child. I ſaw with pleaſure that her attachment to her little girl increaſed from day to day, and that ſhe appeared much eaſier in her mind, and did not ſeem to be ſo ſenſible to the bitterneſs of her fate: but the ſtroke was given, as I have ſaid before. Her health was too much hurt, and her weak lungs had ſuffered too greatly in the firſt days of her misfortune. After ſhe had paſſed ſo many days and nights abandoned to remorſe and the agonies of grief, I began to be alarmed when I ſaw her recover her ſpirits, without gaining either her ſtrength or her colour. She alſo became thinner every day, which made me fear for her life. I communicated my apprehenſions to M. de Mericourt, who had

perceived as well as me the rapid change in the health of my friend. We agreed it was neceſſary ſhe ſhould wean the child; and, with ſome difficulty, ſhe conſented, giving me, with a ſhower of tears, the dear little baby, of whom, from that time, I took the entire management. Alas, this poor little innocent was deſtined to owe every thing to me. It may be eaſily ſeen from what I have ſaid, I was on the point of loſing the dear companion of my wretchedneſs; but it is impoſſible ever to feel, nor can I deſcribe the deſpair I was in, when I ſaw it was not in our power to ſave her, and that I muſt bid her an eternal farewel. Nothing but the aſſiduous attention and conſoling exhortations of my good protector could poſſibly have enabled me to outlive the unfortunate Nina. But this good and valuable friend, whom heaven ſeemed to inſpire, brought me, by his zealous and pious remonſtrances, to be ſenſible of the principles of religion and humanity, which taught me to ſuffer without complaining, and which would lead

lead me to preſerve myſelf, in order to fulfil my duty to the infant I had adopted. I recollected the promiſes I had made to her poor mother: She had intreated me, with uplifted hands, to live, in order to ſupply her place to her unhappy child. "She will ſoon have no "other friend than you," ſaid ſhe; "do "not abandon her, my deareſt friend; "love her for her own ſake and for mine, "but do not talk to her of her unfor-"tunate mother. Let her never know, "if poſſible, the ſtory of her unhappy "birth, and ſpare yourſelf the embar-"raſſment of naming her father, un-"leſs ſhe ſhould ever be ſo happy as to "meet with him. In that caſe, my "dear friend, you will deliver into his "hands this packet, in which I have "put his picture; it is a writing, ſigned "by him, to teſtify that he is the fa-"ther of my child." I took the packet to make her eaſy, but without hope of ever making uſe of it in favour of the poor Ninette. I ſaw no probable end of our unfortunate ſituation, and I was yet

deſtined to ſee myſelf deprived of the only conſolation which was left me—of my friend, of my ſecond father, of the ſole being, in ſhort, who exiſted for me in nature. From the death of my poor friend this good old man had become more dear to me. From day to day his inſtructing converſation greatly attached me to him. I never quitted him without felicitating myſelf with having heard him. How many hours have I paſſed, ſitting by him with my little Ninette in my arms, all attention, with my eyes fixed on his venerable countenance, which a long white beard rendered ſtill more reſpectable, and gave more weight to his wiſe diſcourſe. "My child," ſaid he, ſometimes, when I was expreſſing my gratitude, and congratulating myſelf on the happineſs of having met with him, and the wiſh to preſerve his life yet a long time; "My child," ſaid this good old man, "I am not immortal. "Accuſtom yourſelf to the idea of ſoon "ſeeing me diſappear from the world. "Do not fear the time when I muſt

"leave

" leave you alone here. I have paſſed " twenty years without being weary of " the place, and without a wiſh to go " out of it; but you have not the ſame " reaſons which I had to determine you " to remain here. You will make uſe " of the firſt favourable opportunity to " depart, and you will do right; but, " in ſpite of this hope, which I adviſe " you to preſerve, act in the ſame man- " ner as if you had none. Endea- " vour to find amuſements that may at- " tach you, and employ you ſufficiently " to prevent your being tired or diſcou- " raged. Never ſuffer deſpair to get " the better of you. Avoid regret, and " reſiſt the immoderate deſires of quit- " ting the unhappy ſituation to which " you are reduced. Never loſe ſight of " that Sovereign Being who watches " over your preſervation. Implore his " goodneſs, and be aſſured he will never " abandon you." This good counſel, which I wiſhed I might not for a long time be obliged to follow, affected me deeply, and increaſed my fear and anx-

iety for the health of my worthy friend which appeared to be on the decline for ſome time paſt. "Alas!" ſaid I, recollecting his diſcourſe, he is preparing me for a misfortune which perhaps may very ſoon happen. I prayed for his preſervation. I entreated heaven to prolong his life, at leaſt to the time when my poor Ninette would be able to conſole me, and join me in weeping for his loſs. He one day heard me repeating this prayer, which in my enthuſiaſm I had uttered aloud. "Generous, affec-
"tionate child," ſaid he, addreſſing me, "how do you make me wiſh for "life; how does your gratitude affect "me!" A deep ſigh, and ſome tears which I ſaw fall from his eyes, rendered him ſtill more dear to me, and made me more ſenſible of the neceſſity, as well as my wiſhes, of preſerving his life as long as my own. I took his hand, which I preſſed in mine, and told him, with reſpectful tenderneſs, this earneſt wiſh of my heart. "Hear me, too lovely "creature," ſaid this good and vene-

rable old man, gently withdrawing his hand, which I ſtill held; "let us not "rebel againſt nature; let us yield to "neceſſity, and not vainly torment our-"ſelves, to retard an event which it is not "in our power to reſiſt. I perhaps re-"gret more than you do, that I have not "yet thirty years to devote to you. "I think of it daily, and not without "great uneaſineſs. What is to become of "you when I am no more! The timi-"dity natural to your age and ſex, and "your delicate conſtitution, makes me "tremble for your life, which is dearer "to me than my own. I would fain, "before I die, ſee you at eaſe. At your "age every thing appears frightful; "even things the moſt natural, when "not known, inſpire fear, and the "heightened imagination ſees danger "where there is none. You have great "underſtanding and ſweetneſs of tem-"per, which give me hopes you will "ſoon be able to bring your mind, "which perhaps is endued with rather "too much ſenſibility, to yield to the

" circumſtances of your ſituation. I " conceive all your troubles, and ſhare " them with you. I have known the " bitterneſs an afflicted heart feels on " the loſs of a beloved object. Like " you, I have loſt all that was moſt " dear to me, at the time when we were " to have been united." He knew, that this was the ſituation of M. d'Ermancour and myſelf, as I had informed him of it. " But you have hopes which I " had not. You perhaps may one day " ſee again the happy mortal for whom " you weep; I anxiouſly wiſh it for your " ſake. God who knows my heart is wit- " neſs, that I would if poſſible haſten the " moment ſo delightful to you, and your " lover; but alas, I cannot wiſh to be a " witneſs of it. You will one day have an " explanation of what I ſay, and which at " this time I ſhould bluſh to lay more open " to you." After a ſhort ſilence, in which I ſaw him in great emotion, he added, " Let us now enter on the ſubject of the " advice I muſt give you, reſpecting " the cares you muſt take upon your-

" ſelf

" ſelf when I ſhall be no more: I can-
" not look forward to it, but with ex-
" treme concern, as you cannot ſubſiſt
" but by labour and fatigue. I cannot ſee
" with indifference, and without murmur-
" ing at the injuſtice of your fate, a perſon
" ſo lovely as yourſelf expoſed to a thou-
" ſand evils. My own misfortunes I
" have endured with an heroic and
" never-failing courage; but I have not
" the ſame firmneſs on your account.
" Give me hopes in your turn, my dear
" child; make uſe of the time which
" remains for me to paſs with you, in
" learning to preſerve the fruits of my
" induſtry; I will give you particulars
" in writing, of all that you are to do
" from day to day, and wiſh I was able
" alſo to impart to you the ſtrength
" and courage of which you will ſtand
" in need."—" Ah, why," ſaid I, taking one of his hands, " all this precaution,
" which pierces my heart? Why does
" my worthy friend pleaſe himſelf by
" preſenting to my eyes the frightful
" proſpect of an event that may never
" happen?

" happen? May not I die before you,
" although I am ſo much younger? Ah,
" I wiſh it moſt ſincerely, I aſſure you.
" You alſo ought to wiſh it, for my
" happineſs, if you love me."——" If
" I love you, adorable girl!" ſaid he, taking me in his arms, with an air of eagerneſs and concern which ſurpriſed me even to a degree of terror, though I knew not why. " If I love you!" ſaid he; " Can you doubt it?" I was far from imagining any thing criminal in the action of this good old man. I determined however to be more reſerved in future, when I teſtified my gratitude. As ſoon as he perceived the effect which the momentary tranſport to which he had delivered himſelf had upon my mind: " Pardon me, virtuous Zelia," ſaid he, at the firſt moment I tried to diſengage myſelf from his arms; " I have
" only exceeded the bounds of politeneſs,
" in pointing out too ardently the friend-
" ſhip you have inſpired me with. Ah,
" my God," ſaid he, " can you ſuſpect me
" of a weakneſs unworthy yourſelf or
" me?

" me? Cannot I adore you, without
" giving you offence? Can I never
" convince you of my reſpect and ten-
" derneſs, without inſpiring you with
" repugnance for ſentiments as pure
" as your own heart. Say but one
" word, and if you require it, I will
" always approach you with the re-
" ſpect due to a divinity; I will readily
" conſent to render you the homage of
" which you are ſo worthy, if I may
" by that means retrieve a moment of
" forgetfulneſs, and merit your future
" confidence."

I remained, during this ſtrange converſation, in the ſame attitude I had taken in diſengaging myſelf from his arms. I then ſat down and caſt my eyes on the ground, my mind being agitated with various ſentiments which I could not eaſily explain, notwithſtanding the light which this good man had given me, in demanding my forgiveneſs, and in fearing to have loſt my confidence. I could not reconcile my ideas with the figure of this venerable old man,

man, who had never, till that moment, appeared to employ his thoughts on any thing but preparing for death, and appeared to have no other fears of that, but what were occaſioned by his dread of the forlorn ſituation in which he muſt leave me. Theſe ideas made me weep. I envied the fate of my poor friend, when I conſidered to what dangers I was expoſed. But the hermit's repentance was ſo ſincere, I ſaw ſo much candour in his expreſſions, he was ſo truly polite, and had a deſire ſo earneſt to convince me that he loved me with the ſame reſpect he ſhould feel for a divinity, that I ſoon recovered myſelf. I was not ſorry that this good old man treated me with a kind of veneration. I ſhould have preferred, in his attachment to me, the expreſſions of a paternal tenderneſs; but, after what I had diſcovered, I ſaw plainly that our familiarity might have been attended with inconveniences which it was neceſſary to avoid. The reſerve which I from this time uſed in my behaviour and converſation,

ſation, ſoon rendered our intimate ſociety painful and diſtreſſing. I no longer took a pleaſure in hearing M. de Mericourt talk; and he never ſpoke to me but with an air of embarraſſment. He ſometimes paſſed whole days without ſaying more than a few indifferent words at our meals. Whatever efforts I made to appear more confident in the preſence of the good old man, I could not alter my behaviour, and he ſoon found himſelf overcome by the grief which he felt on this occaſion. I loſt him about ſix months after the death of my friend. "I die as I have lived," ſaid he, a few hours before this unfortunate cataſtrophe. "I have ever been the victim "of a ſeducing and deceitful paſſion, "which has empoiſoned the beſt days "of my life, and which has re-"ſerved for me one of its ſharpeſt "arrows, to finiſh my miſerable ca-"reer." What!" ſaid I, with an exclamation of grief, throwing myſelf on my knees by his bed-ſide. "What is

"it

" it you tell me, my dear benefactor!
" my protector! my father! Ah, you
" are not the man you have now
" described! I know no other than the
" respectable old man who received me
" with so much hospitality, who has
" given me such prudent advice, and
" who has inspired me with the most
" sacred and respectful attachment: his
" features will ever be engraven in the
" inmost depth of my heart."——" I
" am unworthy to fill so honourable a
" place," said he, interrupting me, and making a sign to me to rise; " this
" is too much, noble and virtuous
" Zelia; spare me the confusion of see-
" ing an angel humble herself at my
" feet. Yes, you are indeed an angel,
" whose consoling expressions inspire me
" with joy and admiration in these my
" last moments. Leave me, loveliest of
" women; go from this dismal and un-
" healthy place, which is unfit for your
" youth; go and breathe an air pure
" as your own soul.——All-power-
" ful Heaven," added he, laying his hand

hand on his heart, and caſting his eyes upwards, " preſerve thy moſt beautiful " work! Protect, and load with thy " favours this amiable woman, whom " you created for the glory and hap- " pineſs of her friends! Reſtore her to " her parents, and to ſociety, of which " ſhe muſt ever make one of the " brighteſt ornaments; and where ſhe " will inſpire every one with the love of " virtue! Bleſs her, gracious Heaven, " as I myſelf bleſs her in thy name at " this moment; and deign, great God, " to render her happy!" I then replaced myſelf in the attitude I had quitted, and put myſelf on my knees, to receive the benediction of this holy man, who ſeemed at this moment to be inſpired by Heaven, and worthy to obtain the favours he demanded for me. I then took in my arms the little Ninette, who was placed by me. " Bleſs alſo this inno- " cent creature," preſenting her to him; " beſeech the Lord to preſerve her to " me, whilſt I entreat him to leave you " with us, to ſerve as a father to us " both.

" both. " Ah, do not deprive us of " this conſolation!" cried I, addreſſing my petition to the Supreme Being. " Reſtore the health and ſtrength of our " worthy friend; let him live for our " happineſs, and for the ſupport of our " weakneſs!" A torrent of tears ran down my cheeks whilſt I made this fervent prayer, which had nearly proved fatal to the poor ſick man, as it cauſed in him a violent emotion.——" Enough, enough, " generous girl," ſaid he, ſobbing, and making a ſign to me to go from him; " leave me, leave me."——I was going to quit him, when I obſerved he breathed with difficulty, and that his face was pale and livid: as I approached I thought he was dead: I called to him many times without gaining an anſwer; but a little cordial, which I made him ſwallow with great difficulty, reſtored him. He repeated his entreaties to make me quit his chamber; as ſoon as he was better I did ſo, againſt my will; but was on the point of returning often, as if I had foreſeen the misfortune

tune which threatened me. I went to my own room with a ſad and wounded heart; I put my baby to bed; and then went into the garden to take the benefit of the air, before I returned to my ſick friend. But I had ſeen him for the laſt time! He was not in his bed when I returned, about an hour after. Let any one imagine my aſtoniſhment and grief at this unexpected abſence, and which in his weak ſtate I had thought impoſſible.——"What is then become "of him, good God!" ſaid I, in a moſt ſorrowful tone, after I had made many ineffectual ſearches. "You alone can "inſtruct me where to find him. He "was incapable of moving without your "aſſiſtance!" I formed a thouſand conjectures, after being tired and diſtreſſed with my ill ſucceſs. In the middle of the night I recollected that I had forgot to go to the rock in which he had placed the corpſe of his miſtreſs. I ſhook with horror, and from that moment dreaded leſt he had gone and buried himſelf alive in that tomb. I haſtily roſe from my bed,

bed, upon which I had thrown myſelf without undreſſing, in order to reſt a few minutes. I ran to this gloomy repoſitory, which the moon ſhone upon, ſo much taken up with the object I was ſeeking, and the aſſiſtance I hoped to give him, that I had not the ſmalleſt fear or reluctance to enter. Fortunately I found it ſhut, which was a great happineſs for me. If I had entered it I could not long have ſupported the dreadful ſpectacle which I perceived through a ſmall aperture that gave light into this dreary cave. This aſylum for the dead contained two of thoſe which were moſt dear to me. My poor friend was placed on one ſide of the wife of M. de Mericourt, and he lay extended at their feet, without motion, with death painted on his countenance. He was no longer alive; I called him many times, but he gave no ſigns of exiſtence. In ſhort, having for a long time wept over my unhappy friends, I envied their fate, in looking forward to that which I muſt experience alone in this frightful ſolitude.

tude. I ſhould not have been able to have quitted this ſad place, where I ſhould have buried myſelf alive, had I been able to have entered it. But this good, this generous old man, had foreſeen every thing. The ſame cave which he had deſtined for his wife, he alſo deſtined for himſelf; and in conſequence of it had made a door to it, which rendered it impenetrable both to man and beaſt. It was made of a large ſtone, cut in ſuch a manner as it might be eaſily moved on the inſide by making it ſlide into grooves which exactly fitted, and faſtened it cloſe. At length I regained the houſe, oppreſſed with melancholy and fatigue. The cries of my poor Ninette, whom I had neglected too long a time, re-animated my weakened ſpirits. I reproached myſelf for having, as I called it, abandoned her. The ſituation in which I found her made me forget every thing elſe; I thought of nothing but giving her that aſſiſtance ſhe ſtood ſo much in need of. She had taken nothing all the day, ſo that the poor little creature

creature was almoſt ſtarved: her voice was almoſt extinct, by dint of crying. I relieved her from this weak ſtate, by giving her nouriſhment frequently, though a very ſmall quantity at a time. But I pitied her ſituation, as I recalled her to life.——" Poor little innocent," ſaid I, bathing her face with tears, " what a " melancholy fate do I prepare for you, " in aſſociating your deſtiny with mine! " Alas, why are we not both placed by " the ſide of your mother! But I pro- " miſed her, to preſerve my life, in or- " der to ſupport you. I have promiſed," repeated I, redoubling my careſſes: " Ah, " if I had not, could I have abandoned " thee my lovely babe? No, never, " never ſhall you again experience the " cruel negligence in which I left you " this day; never will I ſeparate myſelf " from my dear child; I will live to love " her, to take care of her, and to ſupply " to her the place of her mother." I held her to my boſom, I laviſhed careſſes on her, of which ſhe ſeemed ſenſible, by preſſing me in her little arms. She was then

then near a twelvemonth old, and already promiſed to be as good as ſhe was pretty. I grew calmer by degrees, and after having made my complaints to Heaven, and prayed for ſtrength to ſupport my misfortunes, I went to ſleep by my little infant, whom I had put to bed; but the care of every thing, which from that time depended wholly on me, awakened me very early; I got up in order to ſet about my employment, and paſſing through M. de Mericourt's chamber, I perceived lying on a table a folded paper, directed for me, which I had overlooked in the confuſion of my grief. This contained the inſtructions which the good old man had promiſed me, upon the occupations of his houſehold. Every thing was particularly arranged, every article pointed out, what I muſt do from day to day; and he concluded by expreſſing his concern for his late conduct with regard to me, which he did in the following manner: "What pain might "I have ſpared you for many years, if "I had had moderation enough to

" have entirely concealed from you the " knowledge of thoſe ſentiments you " had inſpired me with! but I ſuffered " you to learn ſufficient, to draw upon " me, what I moſt dreaded, your ha- " tred! whatever pains you take to " ſoften my remorſe, which can never " end but with my life, it will ſoon " bring me to the grave; I ſhall no " longer exiſt, when you read this letter. " Do not torment yourſelf by ſearch- " ing after my wretched corpſe, it will " then be withdrawn from your ſight, " to ſpare you ſo horrid a ſpectacle, and " the cruel neceſſity of removing it.— " Adieu, lovely and too amiable crea- " ture! I am going to rejoin her who " ought never to have been out of my " remembrance; and it is by expiring " at her feet, that I hope to obtain my own " pardon, and regain your eſteem." At the bottom he had added ſome lines, to confirm to me the gift of his dwelling, and every thing which was then in his poſſeſſion, ſpecifying many particulars, ſuch as gold and jewels. He hoped,

he

he ſaid, that theſe riches, which he had always preſerved in caſe of neceſſity, might be more uſeful to me than they had been to him, in facilitating the means of my deliverance. I regretted very much the not having found this paper the evening before, when I returned; I might perhaps have been time enough to have ſaved him, but I was at that time ſo troubled, and ſo perſuaded of the great help he ſtood in need of from my aſſiſtance, wherever he was, that I thought of nothing but the neceſſity of running to ſeek him in every place where I ſuſpected he might be. I ſhall not give myſelf much time to reflect, as I did then, on the weakneſs and inconſtancy of man. I ſhall ſlightly paſs over the faults of M. de Mericourt, and think only of his goodneſs and excellent qualities. He joined to great merit, an agreeable underſtanding, a noble mind, together with a heart replete with benevolence and generoſity; but, too eaſily inflamed, his exalted imagination had made him unhappy throughout his life.

A woman whom he had loved in his youth, and whoſe parents not being willing he ſhould marry her, had made him quit his country, and renounce his rank as well as his fortune; another woman had inſpired him with a paſſion in the Eaſt-Indies, where he had amaſſed great riches, the greateſt part of which he had left behind him, in order to return to France; we then find him arrive at this ſolitary place, and fix himſelf there for ever, after the loſs of this dear wife; and he is now dead, at the age of fifty-eight years, from a new effect of the ſame paſſion, which in all probability ſhortened his days. The reader now ſees me arrived at the moſt painful and moſt unhappy period of my life. Till now the good advice of my friends, and the confidence I had in them, had kept up my hopes, and ſoftened the wretchedneſs of my fate; but when I found myſelf abandoned to my own melancholy reflections, I ſaw no longer any means of ſuſtaining my miſery. I continually ſaid to myſelf, that I had no longer any per-

ſon

ſon on earth who was intereſted for me; that without a miracle I could never hope to ſee again either my father or M. d'Ermancour; that I was abandoned by all the world, and condemned to periſh with grief and trouble. I paſſed near a month in the blackeſt melancholy, without being able to employ myſelf with any thing but my misfortunes, weeping every moment, and wiſhing every day to die with my little Ninette, whom I continually held in my arms. I could not quit her a moment without falling into deſpair; her air of innocence and tranquillity rendered me ſomewhat calm; the deſire of preſerving her inſpired more pleaſing ſentiments; without this dear infant, and without the principles of the Chriſtian religion, I could never have ſupported myſelf ſo long; but theſe ſacred duties, of which I never loſt ſight, ſuſtained my ſpirits and my miſerable life; they gave me that courage of which I ſtood ſo much in need, and the ſtrength which was neceſſary for me to ſupport the painful la-

bours to which my ſituation condemned me.

My readers will not perhaps be ſorry to ſee how I was able to ſubſiſt alone, for ten years, in this Deſert, where I had always had, not only the neceſſaries, but even the ſuperfluities, of life, as well in regard to every convenience as nouriſhment. It has been ſeen in what manner M. de Mericourt had procured them, and it will now be made known in particular what I did to preſerve them, by the directions of my benefactor. It will be neceſſary to deſcribe the ſituation of my habitation. It took up a conſiderable ſpace; one ſide of it was encloſed by a tall fence of pomegranate-trees, within which were the houſe, and the poultry-yards. The garden and the cultivated land were below the houſe and yards. This little dwelling was bounded on the north and weſt ſides by a high mountain; it was only open and acceſſible on the eaſt ſide, through an immenſe foreſt; the ſea terminated the ſouth, and was in front of the

the houſe: at the diſtance of about ſixteen hundred paces from the outward incloſure, which formed the yards, a beautiful orchard, regularly planted with different trees, ornamented the front of the houſe; many ſprings ran down from the northern mountains, and in collecting themſelves here and there, formed natural caſcades and agreeable rivulets, whoſe clear and limpid water was guided by ſtone troughs into the garden, for the uſe of watering it. A child might have performed this operation; to effect which it was only neceſſary to ſlide a plank, which required no ſtrength, over two grooves, and ſuffered the water to run from a reſervoir, which confined it, by letting down the plank when the plants were enough watered. By this it may be imagined I could, without difficulty, keep up my garden, whoſe light ſoil required no effort to cultivate. The care of the birds and animals in the outward yards, which appeared the moſt troubleſome and diſguſting, became only an object of diſſipation. I found nothing

in it diſagreeable; I had no inconvenience from bad ſmells, which in cloſe ſtables cannot be avoided; for all the animals which I attended were free, and in the open air. They went every morning into the wood, and returned at the ſound of my voice, whenever I called them into the yard, where they were ſure of meeting with better food than they met with in the foreſt. Since the death of M. de Mericourt, I had only raiſed and bred up the ſmaller kinds of animals, ſuch as goats, turkies, fowls, &c. The goats, before they went out to the foreſt, came to the door to be milked, and while I was milking them, would eat ſome nice food which I gave them. Let us now attend the interior part of the houſe. My cookery was neither tedious nor difficult to perform, as my principal food was the milk of my goats, and the eggs of my poultry. I made very good cakes of the flour of rice, and Turkey corn. The ground in which I ſowed the grain was ſo fruitful, and ſo eaſy to cultivate, that with taking very

little

little care, I gathered every year more than I could conſume for my own uſe, as well as for that of my animals. The mill in which I ground my corn was made like our coffee-mills, only much larger; I could grind in leſs than two hours as much as would laſt for five or ſix days. I wanted neither coffee nor tea; the good M. de Mericourt had left a large quantity of both; but I found I wanted courage to procure myſelf more nouriſhing food than what I have juſt mentioned. I ſoon began to perceive that this regimen, to which I had not been accuſtomed, was inſufficient to ſupport my health and ſtrength. Milk, of which I was very fond, diſagreed with me when I made it my principal food; and at the end of five or ſix months, I was concerned to find it neceſſary for me to change my diet, and apply to my poultry-yard for another ſort; but I could not bear the thought of killing with my own hands theſe poor animals which I had nurſed and brought up, therefore was a long time before I could determine on ſo in-

human an act: At length I went one morning into the poultry-yard, and reſolved to conquer my repugnance, as the effect might prove fatal to me; but when I ſaw theſe poor creatures put themſelves into my hands with confidence, I for that time abandoned my ſcheme, without however entirely renouncing this reſource, which was become ſo neceſſary to my health. I thought of a ſcheme, which though it prevented me from being eye-witneſs to ſo diſtreſſing an action, yet was not leſs cruel to the poor victim which was to be ſacrificed. I prepared a trap, which I baited, and placed at night in the corner of the yard. This treachery, with which I could not help reproaching myſelf, ſucceeded. In the morning I found a fine fat fowl ſtrangled in my trap. I afterwards repeated this artful piece of deceit, which was a means of reſtoring my health, and my poultry-yard did not appear to be unfurniſhed. All theſe little animated beings diverted my ſolitude, and intereſted me greatly. They knew

knew me, and I was ſo well acquainted with them, as to find out if any one of them did not return home. I ſaw them twice a day, morning and evening, to give them their food. I had other animals which I loved more than thoſe of my poultry-yard, and which always kept cloſe to the houſe; they knew exactly the hours when I ate my meals, and never failed coming at thoſe times to the orchard, where I uſually ſat under the ſhade, in the front of the houſe. Ninette was delighted to ſee theſe little creatures picking up the crumbs which fell from the table, and taking from our hands whatever we gave them. Afterwards, theſe little familiar animals would place themſelves in the ſun, and ſport about us, or elſe lay down to their repoſe, looking with tranquillity at us. Above all, the little kids greatly diverted my child, when ſhe ſaw them bounding here and there, around their mother; they would alſo follow us in our walks. A favourite goat with her young ones, two or three beautiful Angola cats, a

Turkey cock, with his companions, and a pair of turtle-doves, formed this diverting group. While we remained under the ſhade, the goat and her kids would brouze on the graſs near us, and the doves would fly from branch to branch, and return to us whenever we called them. Ninette played with her cat, whilſt I was either employed in needle-work or reading; it was uſually after dinner that we took this recreation. It may be ſeen by theſe particulars, that I might live at eaſe, and fulfil my various occupations without much difficulty. It was by forming a rule of conduct, and never remaining idle, as M. de Mericourt had adviſed me, that I contrived to paſs, without miſery, days which I had hitherto found ſo long and inſupportable. Every hour of the day was marked out for a different employ. In the morning I attended all my animals; after breakfaſt the garden; and from that time to dinner I took care of the houſehold affairs: in the afternoon, I had ſome hours of reſt, which I employed,

as I have juſt mentioned, in walking, working, or reading, for M. de Mericourt had left me a library well furniſhed with books of all kinds, and among others many hiſtories and novels. The reading of novels gave me the idea of writing my own hiſtory. This method of employing my time was that which afforded me moſt pleaſure; I loved to recal to my mind all the moſt trifling circumſtances of the happy days which I had paſſed with my grandmother; I deeply regretted this good parent, and often reproached myſelf with bitterneſs for having left her too abruptly. "What grief have I "occaſioned!" cried I, "what misfor-"tunes have been derived from this flight, "which I thought innocent! Where-"fore, Lord, is it that thou haſt only "preſerved the moſt guilty of the vic-"tims of thy vengeance? Why has "my worthy and reſpectable father "ſuffered thoſe evils which I alone "ought to have experienced; and this "tender generous lover, that you have "alſo in your anger deſtroyed, what

"has

" has he done, great God, to merit ſo " ſevere a puniſhment? Alas! he has " loved me too well; this is his crime! " He would at this time have been happy " in his family, if he had never ſeen me. " It is I, it is my unhappy deſtiny, " which has occaſioned his loſs!" I was more affected by this idea than by the ſituation I was reduced to. I ſhould have ſuffered my evils without complaining, if the regret of my own heart had not aggravated them. I alſo reproached myſelf with the loſs of my poor governeſs. Nevertheleſs, I accuſtomed myſelf by degrees to the horror of my ſolitude. Every thing was ſo tranquil and ſo calm in the place of my retreat, that I was no longer afraid of any thing. This was a great comfort to me, who at firſt trembled at the ſmalleſt noiſe, and particularly dreaded the night-time, when every thing appears diſmal to a terrified imagination. I ſuffered a long time from theſe ill-grounded fears, which made me ſee inevitable dangers in every poſſible ſhape. Nothing then could

could have encouraged my agitated mind, but my entire reſignation to the will of the Supreme Being. I felt myſelf more tranquil when I had implored his aid and protection. " It is he, it is the " father of all mankind, who has always " ſupported me in my greateſt diſtreſſes. " He has puniſhed me," ſaid I, " ſome- " times; but he has never abandoned " me." I every day returned him thanks for preſerving my little companion. I thought ſhe grew too ſlowly according to my wiſhes, though ſhe was very forward of her age both as to perſon and mind. But the eagerneſs with which I wanted to hear the ſound of her voice, and to be able to talk to her, made me apprehenſive leſt there ſhould be ſomething amiſs in her organs of ſpeech, which ſometimes happens in early infancy, particularly among children who are neglected, and not ſufficiently exerciſed. It was not ſo with my little Ninette; I was continually employed in doing every thing in my power for her advantage, and in exerciſing both

her bodily and mental faculties. The firſt words I heard her utter completed my joy. I was delighted to hear her call me her "dear mamma." She followed me about every where, giving me a thouſand careſſes, and aſking queſtions about every thing ſhe ſaw. I very early informed her, that we were not the only inhabitants of the world of the ſame ſpecies; but that ſhe might not be diſguſted with her preſent ſituation, I did not give her a very engaging picture of the people who lived in other countries, and of whom ſhe knew nothing. She ſometimes aſked me if I had ſeen the world which I talked of; I told her I had paſſed a part of my life there; but I was very glad to be away from it, becauſe I knew no other perſon whom I regarded, but my good grandmother. I told her I had loſt my father, and a good friend, for whoſe loſs I could never be conſoled. In ſhort, I accuſtomed her by degrees to ſee me weep for this friend of my heart, and I taught her to pronounce his name for the ſake of

hearing

hearing it. I frequently deſcribed M. de Ermancour's agreeable perſon and mind to her, as if ſhe perfectly comprehended me. I tried to give her a general idea of men, by telling her they were formed like us, and talked in the ſame manner, but I had great difficulty in making her combine the two ideas together. Often when I have talked to her of M. de Ermancour, ſhe has interrupted me to aſk, if he was as pretty and genteel as Jou, Jou, which was the name of her little cat. Another day ſhe brought me a young rabbit which ſhe had found, telling me it was M. de Ermancour. "My dear mamma, my good mamma," ſaid ſhe, "keep him faſt, that you may "not cry any more for him." She every day and hour was ſaying ſome of thoſe kind of things, which I could not wonder at when I thought of her age, and the little knowledge ſhe had yet obtained. But as I did not always make theſe reflections, the two or three firſt times that ſhe announced M. de Ermancour to me, I really thought ſhe had

had ſeen him, and haſtened to the place where ſhe pointed; but inſtead of ſeeing my lover, I perceived either a kid or a pretty bird, or ſome other animal, which it pleaſed her to call by his name. I was much diſpleaſed, and told her croſsly, that ſhe was a ſimpleton, and that there was nothing here which reſembled a man. But I might have talked on, I gained nothing by it. "Well, ſince it is not "him," ſaid ſhe, we ſhall find him "another time." By degrees I was accuſtomed to theſe little childiſh expreſſions, and I did not love my dear Ninette at all the leſs for the ſurpriſes ſhe had given me. I embraced her every moment, and my affection increaſed for her as I ſaw her daily grow and improve. The qualities of her heart and mind, which I diſcovered every day, flattered me much more than the charms of her perſon. I took advantage of her firſt years to inſpire her with my own ſentiments, which was the eaſier to do, as I conſtantly gave her an example, and made it a point, that no kind of amuſe-

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ment ſhould ever prevent her from performing the duties which I had appointed for her. I learnt a great deal myſelf by inſtructing her; I put no conſtraint upon her; ſhe had no ſet hours either for her exercîſes or her pleaſures. Very frequently the exactneſs which is required of children, diſguſts them. It often happens, that they are called from a favourite amuſement in which they take great delight, and which they quit with reluctance, to learn their leſſons; and from this proceeds that bad humour and averſion to learn every thing which is put before them. I avoided this inconvenience with my little Ninette, and never gave her leſſons but when I ſaw her inclined to be idle, and only kept her employed as long as ſhe could be ſo without being weary. Theſe attentions on my part ſpared us many little diſagreements, and made her learn much more eaſily every thing I wiſhed to teach her. She took up and laid down her different exerciſes twenty times a day without my oppoſing her; ſhe would often

often return to them of her own accord, becauſe ſhe knew I ſhould not keep her to them againſt her inclination; and that which is frequently looked upon as a miſery to children of her age, was quite an amuſement to her. This method of teaching children is ſurely the eaſieſt and the beſt; but it is ſcarcely practicable in the world; it is neceſſary to be abſolutely ſeparated from it, as I was, in order to ſucceed. Beſides, the earneſt deſire I had for my little companion to be able to converſe and reaſon with me, made me take thoſe meaſures which I ſhould have neglected had I been with her in any other ſituation. I had ſo great a deſire to hear her ſpeak, and was ſo impatient to converſe with her, that I talked to her a long time before ſhe could comprehend me, or anſwer a ſingle word. At length I arrived at the period ſo much wiſhed for. She underſtood and anſwered me perfectly from the time ſhe was ſeven years old. At eight, ſhe had an appearance of eaſe and

ſenſibility

ſenſibility equal to my own. She was alſo very ſerious, although I did all in my power to inſpire her with gaiety; but not having enough myſelf, and that which I affected was ſo forced that it had no effect on her, I was concerned to ſee her with a gravity ſo little conformable to her years. Sometimes I attributed it to her being diſcontented with her ſituation; but I ſoon perceived that it was natural to her, by the facility with which ſhe copied me in every thing; nor could ſhe regret any thing, becauſe ſhe knew no other ſituation than the one ſhe was in. Mine was very different; I experienced ſorrows which purſued me every where, and which even time and my new ſociety could not ſoften. I ſaw years paſs on, and my hopes with them. I could no longer flatter myſelf with finding any relief to my troubles. The reflections which theſe ideas occaſioned increaſed my wretchedneſs, and made it inſupportable. I was abſolutely abandoned. There was no longer any method to conceal it. After eight years reſidence

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in my iſland, every thing which the old man had told me about the commerce which he had had with mankind, appeared to me as tales invented in order to conſole me. One night, amongſt others, when I was more than ever taken up with theſe ſad ideas, I heard a knocking at my door; terror inſtantly ſeized me; I awakened Ninette, who lay aſleep by me, in order to give me a little more courage. I did not tell her the cauſe of my fears, for I had always avoided ſaying any thing to frighten her, and took great care to conceal my own weakneſſes. But I was not enough miſtreſs of myſelf to conceal this from her. At the inſtant when I had awakened her, and while I was conſidering what the noiſe could be, I heard a ſecond knocking louder than the firſt; and a third followed, which burſt the door open. I then concluded we were loſt. I cried out, embracing my dear Ninette, who began weeping, and clung cloſe to me, as if to avoid that which made us tremble. I could not comfort her; I was myſelf ſo terrified and

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ſo agitated that I could not ſpeak. At length, after having a little recovered myſelf, I liſtened attentively, and heard ſomebody walking in the next chamber. I always made uſe of the inner room which the old man had given me on my firſt arrival; ſo that there was ſtill another door to force open before they could come to me. My firſt thought was, to ſave myſelf by the window which looked upon the garden behind the houſe. I ſeized my little Ninette, and haſtily opened the window, which was not above four or five feet from the ground, and jumped down without any hurt. I then took Ninette in my arms, whom I had placed on the ſeat of the window, and ran quickly into the foreſt. It was one of the darkeſt nights, and rained ſo faſt, that I could not go more than an hundred paces from the houſe. I ſeated myſelf under a tree, with my poor baby. I had only had time to ſlip on a night-gown over me. I wrapped Ninette in it, and remained in this ſhocking ſituation till day. I made the

moſt

moſt melancholy reflections upon what would become of me. "Here I am," ſaid I, "a ſecond time expoſed to wan-"der over this foreſt, without knowing "where to obtain refuge, and without "any nouriſhment but what the trees "may afford me." If I had been alone I ſhould ſoon have known what to do; death would inſtantly have terminated all my ſorrows. I had ſuffered long enough not to heſitate to end my days, which were become ſo dreadful to me ſince I had loſt all my hopes. But it was no longer for myſelf that I exiſted; I owed my life to this little creature, who could not live without me. The idea of leaving her alone in the midſt of the foreſt, ſhocked me; and that of deſtroying her firſt, affected me with ſuch a degree of horror, that I could not ſupport the thought of it even for one inſtant. "No, my dear little one," ſaid I, preſſing her to my heart, and bathing her with my tears, "I had much rather ex-"poſe myſelf to every thing which is moſt "dreadful.——Pardon, my dear infant," ſaid

ſaid I, loading her with my careſſes, "pardon the deſpair into which our "ſituation has thrown me."

I remained a long time after abſorbed in the moſt diſtreſſing anxiety and grief; every thought which entered my imagination made me tremble, and inſpired me with a kind of indignation againſt myſelf. I ſhed a torrent of tears, and ſighed and groaned in the moſt diſmal manner. I thought no longer of the dangers which I had avoided by eſcaping. I was no longer afraid of any thing but myſelf. At length, the appearance of day-light calmed my deſpair. I felt my hopes renew as the light increaſed, and by degrees I gained compoſure enough to reaſon coolly upon the event which had juſt happened. I thought that the darkneſs of the night, and the horrid ideas which ſeized me at the moment I heard the noiſe at the door, might have made it appear louder to me than it really was, and led me think of thoſe dreadful things from which I had eſcaped. Theſe reflections comforted me much,

and I even went ſo far as to flatter myſelf with the arrival of M. d'Ermancour. The eagerneſs which he had to ſee me, perhaps, might not permit him to knock gently. This new idea was too pleaſing for me to give it up. My heart beat with inexpreſſible joy, and I could think of nothing elſe. What a fault had I been guilty of in running away; and what could M. d'Ermancour think of me, when he found I had left the houſe! "Perhaps," ſaid I, "he went away immediately in order to ſearch for me "elſewhere, and he is at this time "probably under the greateſt uneaſineſs "on my account." I immediately roſe from my ſeat upon this reflection, and ran with great precipitation towards my dwelling. The idea that I had formed, of being able to find my lover, enchanted me. My legs were ſcarcely able to carry me faſt enough, and my heart palpitated ſo violently that I hardly knew how to fetch my breath. I was forced to ſtop to recover myſelf, but had not patience to wait long enough to find any benefit from

from it, and yet was unable to go on with the ſpeed I wiſhed. I arrived with difficulty at the door, but it was impoſſible for me to go in. My legs bent under me, and my life ſeemed going from me. I ſat down on a bank before the door. Ninette had gone into the houſe without my perceiving her, and came back running to tell me, that a great beaſt was lying in the chamber. The pain and agitation I was in at firſt prevented me from attending to what ſhe ſaid; but ſhe repeated it ſo often, that at laſt I heard her, without however loſing the idea I had conceived. She had deceived me ſo many times, and I had ſo often told her, what ſhe had taken to be M. d'Ermancour were animals, that ſhe did not venture to name him when ſhe met with any; therefore the account ſhe gave me did not alter my way of thinking. I aſked her, when I was a little recovered, how this beaſt was formed. "Oh, Mama," ſaid ſhe, "he "is very big, very big indeed." While I was aſking this queſtion I heard ſomething

walking in the room; and the moment I got up in order to enter, there came out of it a large animal whoſe name I was then ignorant of, but have ſince learnt it was a kind of antelope; who, driven by the rain and ſtorm, and the preſſing neceſſity of bringing forth her young ones, had forced herſelf into the houſe, the outer door of which I happened that day to have left half open. The noiſe we made obliged her to come out ſo faſt, that ſhe threw down my poor little girl, and left her quite motionleſs. "Ah!" cried I, running to take her up, "here, "then, is the cauſe of my fears and "my hopes." I carried my dear Ninette into my chamber, where ſhe remained a quarter of an hour without ſenſe. I was in the moſt dreadful ſituation at the ſight of my poor dying infant. I uttered the moſt lamentable cries, whilſt I was uſing every poſſible method to reſtore her to life. At length I ſucceeded; ſhe opened her eyes, and demanded, with an air of terror, if the wicked beaſt was gone, and whether

ther he had not hurt me. The attention of this lovely creature ſoftened me into tears. I alſo ſhed thoſe of joy when I ſaw ſhe had no wound; but I wept afterwards, with ſhame and grief, at the recollection of the follies with which my fears had inſpired me. On entering my chamber, I found the new-born animals. I concluded the mother would come to ſeek them, therefore carried them haſtily into the garden, twenty or thirty paces from the houſe, in the path through which ſhe had paſſed, to give her an opportunity of carrying them to a diſtance with more eaſe; which ſhe did about half an hour afterwards. I was as much pleaſed to find myſelf at home again in quiet, as if I had actually overcome all thoſe dangers of which I had been in dread ſome hours before. My houſe appeared to me as a palace and an inacceſſible fortreſs, when I compared it to the riſks I ran in wandering over the foreſt without ſhelter. The fatal experience I had of it on my firſt arrival in the iſland, and this laſt proof of

it when I went out, made me more than ever ſenſible of the happineſs I had met with in ſo deſert a place, as finding a well-built houſe, furniſhed with every convenience of life. But the hope which I had entertained of again meeting with M. d'Ermancour increaſed my ſorrows. It ſeemed like loſing him a ſecond time. My deſpair was the ſame, and my ſituation appeared as dreadful as on the firſt day of my arrival in the Deſert. I had no longer any hopes, I had nothing to look forward to, but was wholly diſcouraged.

About five or ſix months after the adventure which had occaſioned my quitting my houſe, I one day perceived, as I was taking a walk, a place where I thought I obſerved the print of a man's foot upon the ſand. I went nearer in order to examine it, and ſaw I was not miſtaken. I looked farther into the wood where the ground was moiſt, and ſaw many footſteps. I was no longer in doubt; but the diſcovery gave me both pleaſure and fear. Without diſtinguiſhing by

by which motive I was moſt agitated, I went on farther, following the footſteps till I came to the banks of the ſea, where I ſaw a boat faſtened by a rope to the trunk of a tree. How ſhall I be able to expreſs the joy which I felt! I ſhould moſt certainly have fallen on the ground, if I had not taken the precaution to ſit down, in order to recover my ſenſes, which ſeemed ready to forſake me. But this moment of calm was preſently ſucceeded by the fear and trouble to which my reflections gave birth, on the danger to which I might be expoſed by putting myſelf in the way of ſtrangers. "Who can aſſure me," ſaid I, "of the "humanity of theſe people whom I ſeek "with ſo much eagerneſs? They may "be either ſavages or pirates, who tra-"verſe the ſeas to take away thoſe "whom they can meet with. Ah! my "dear love," ſaid I, to my little companion, and to whom I had given a thouſand hopes, "Let us not run greater "riſks of being in a worſe ſituation than "we are in at preſent, in order to ſoften

" our fate; but let us return home to " our peaceful ſolitude." I could not, however, entirely loſe ſight of the flattering hope I had conceived. I went over a large part of the wood, though trembling all the time, and fearing to find the perſons whoſe ſteps only I could diſcover. At length, as I returned to rejoin my child, whom I had left ſeated at the foot of a tree, I perceived at ſome diſtance a riband tied to one of the branches of a tree, which I directly laid hold of, and obſerving there was ſome writing on it, with a difficulty and trouble not to be expreſſed, I read theſe words: " If you find this riband, my dear " Zelia, leave in the ſame place ſomething " which may let me know that it is you who " have taken it." I kiſſed a thouſand times this precious proof of the fidelity of my lover, and as often read the paper over, which I wetted with my tears. Delicious tears!—alas, in one moment, how bitter they became! I had in my pocket a patch-box, which M. d'Ermancour muſt remember. I placed it at the foot

of

of the tree from whence I had taken the riband, and that it might be the eaſier diſtinguiſhed, I tied a handkerchief to one of the boughs. But ſtill fearing that all this might not be ſufficient to point out to him the place of my dwelling, which was ſo concealed, that it might eaſily be paſſed without being perceived, I wrote on a piece of paper with my blood, for which purpoſe I pricked my arm, and gave him directions how to find out my abode. I then put it into the box, and returned home enchanted with the diſcovery I had made. I heard poor Ninette weep, as I approached the place where I had left her; but I was not ſurpriſed at it, as ſhe had been left alone long enough to make her impatient. She came running to me the moment ſhe ſaw me, telling me, ſhe had been terribly frightened; for that a beaſt had come to her, that had talked to her.—"How, my dear child!" ſaid I, with a concern which I could not conquer; "you know that beaſts never "talk." At this inſtant I perceived

M. d'Ermancour; I ſcreamed with joy and ſurpriſe, and ran to throw myſelf into his arms—" Ah! then, dear, but too " cruel Zelia," ſaid he, repulſing me with a kind of indignation, " you have " deceived me."——I felt as much confuſed at this reproach, as if I had really deſerved it. I ſaw him go away from me, without being able to ſay a ſingle word to him, or being able to follow him a ſingle ſtep. I had not even ſtrength to ſupport myſelf, and when I loſt ſight of him, I fell down at the foot of a tree without ſenſe or motion. I was drawn from this ſtate by the cries of my little companion, who had been terrified by my fall: that which had juſt happened to me appeared like a dream; but I was too ſoon convinced of its reality. What was I to think—what to do, under ſuch circumſtances? How could I reconcile the eagerneſs of a lover with his precipitate flight? How could I comprehend, or how could I ſupport the idea of the reproaches he had made me? " Is it then " to inſult me, that he is come ſo far!" ſaid

ſaid I, ſhedding a torrent of tears. "Alas! why, if he thinks me guilty, "has he given me marks of the greateſt "tenderneſs in receiving me to his arms? "Why did he afterwards repulſe me "with a kind of horror and indigna-"tion? Why did he come to ſeek me, "if he no longer thinks me worthy of his "affection?" I could not underſtand any of theſe contradictions; and the emotion I was in did not ſuffer me to ſtay long making uſeleſs reflections. I determined to go immediately in ſearch of M. d'Ermancour, who, I thought, might be employed in getting his boat ready, in the place where I had ſeen it. But what was my deſpair, when I ſaw neither the boat, nor the cruel man who had abandoned me! I could not for a long time perſuade myſelf he was gone without me. I ſought him every where with eager eyes, and in order to have a better proſpect, I got upon the top of a rock, and was nearly on the point of throwing myſelf from it, when I ſaw the boat at a diſtance from me, rowing

away. It is impoſſible to deſcribe the ſituation in which I then found myſelf; the picture of the moſt exquiſite grief would but ill paint what I felt; the affliction of a tender mother ſeeing her child expire in her arms, or a beloved wife receiving the laſt adieu of an adored huſband, are nothing in compariſon of what I then endured—to conceive all the horror of my ſituation, people muſt put themſelves in my place, and conſider under what circumſtances, and in what manner, I loſt my lover. He abandoned me in a frightful deſert, and, after having treated me with the moſt unworthy ſuſpicions, I ſaw him depart for ever; and with him I loſt every hope of ever being able to juſtify myſelf in his eyes. I had mine fixed on that floating machine, which, in cleaving the waves, tore my heart in pieces, and carried away with it a part of myſelf. I only turned my eyes from it to ſee at my feet the laſt reſource left me to put an end in one moment to all my misfortunes: I ſhould not have heſitated to throw myſelf into the

ſea,

ſea, if the cries of my little girl had not prevented me. The poor infant thought me loſt, and made ſuch loud complaints that they reached my ears. Her lamentations reminded me of what I owed her, and made my miſery ſtill greater, by the impoſſibility of its ever being in my power to have it leſſened. I remained immoveable, and as if petrified, when I loſt ſight of this fatal veſſel. I had through exceſs of grief nearly loſt the uſe of my ſenſes: I ſcarce ſaw the objects which ſurrounded me; and thus I continued above two hours, all the time ſending forth the moſt doleful cries. I was ſo much troubled in mind, that I did not even perceive poor Ninette, who, with great difficulty, had climbed up the rock where I ſtood; ſhe had come by a path much more difficult than that which I had taken. The danger in which I ſaw her, when ſhe got near to me, made me run haſtily towards her, and her tender embraces reſtored me to a little tranquillity. "Come, my dear "child," ſaid I, taking her in my arms,

"come

" come and calm my deſpair, and ſave " your own life by preventing me " from attempting mine. Come and " ſhare with me thoſe misfortunes " which are equally yours, as I might " have been able to have procured " you a better fate. Cruel deſtiny, " and more cruel M. d'Ermancour, " what then have I done to you, " that you ſhould put yourſelf to the " trouble and difficulty of ſearching out " my habitation, in order to give me " ſtrokes more painful than death " itſelf?——Why did you not, at part- " ing, plunge a dagger into my breaſt? " Why did you not tear out that heart " which you accuſe of having deceived " you. I myſelf would have guided " your hand, and you would have been " leſs barbarous than in ſparing that " life after having poiſoned it." I ſhould have died upon this fatal rock from whence I diſcovered my misfor- tune, if the care which I owed to my dear little companion had not forced me to come down from it, in order to conduct

conduct her home to the houſe. I thought, on my arrival there, I was entering a frightful tomb in which M. d'Ermancour had condemned me to die. I went every day into the moſt gloomy part of the foreſt to conceal my grief, in order that Ninette (who ſoftened and humbled me by her compaſſion for me) ſhould not be witneſs of it. I ſhould even have wiſhed to have concealed the ſtate of my heart from myſelf, being aſhamed of the tenderneſs I ſtill retained for an ingrate who only merited my indifference. In the misfortune which had now befallen me, I ſaw nothing, I felt nothing, but that I had loſt the only thing neceſſary to the ſupport of my life. It was the only delight my heart was capable of, the ſweet and eſtimable ſenſation which perfect love inſpires, that I regretted.——"Ah, my "poor Lizardie," ſaid I often, "my "tender friend, pity the unhappy deſ-"tiny of thy unfortunate companion. "See her at this moment ſtill more af-"flicted than when you bade her a

"laſting

" laſting adieu. Look down upon her, " and petition the Supreme Being to " re-unite her with thee." Thus it was I paſſed my time, in praying for the termination of a life I had no longer courage to ſupport. I was not long able to ſuſtain ſo ſevere a ſhock. My grief got the better of me, and about a fortnight after I was ſeized with a violent fever, which brought me to death's door. I was ſenſible of my danger without being terrified; I only regretted my poor Ninette. The ſituation in which I muſt leave her excited my tendereſt compaſſion. The habit I was in of regarding her as my own child, made me feel for her all the tenderneſs of a mother. I could not caſt my eyes on her without ſhedding tears; and my heart was ready to burſt, when I conſidered that I ought to make known to her the ſecret of her birth. I had never mentioned it to her; but the idea of the diſhonour which ſhe might occaſion me in the world, ſhould chance, which was not impoſſible, one day carry her into

into it, made me determine to do it. I took the opportunity of my fever being abated, to impart to her the ſecret which ſo much oppreſſed my mind. The poor infant was delighted to ſee me a little better, and teſtified her joy by a thouſand actions. " I have then found again " my good mama;" taking one of my hands, which ſhe bathed with her tears.——" Alas, my dear little friend," ſaid I, " I wiſh I was your good mama, " I ſhould not ſuffer ſo much at this " time in declaring to you that it is " not me to whom you owe your life. " No, my child! I am not thy mother, " though I have all the tenderneſs of " one. You are the daughter of an " unfortunate friend, whom I brought " with me into this Deſert: Nina de " Lizardie was her name." I could ſay no more; the little unhappy child burſt into tears the moment ſhe heard me ſay, I was not her mother. She thought I was diſpleaſed with her, and no longer loved her; every thing ſhe ſaid on this ſubject pierced my heart,

and

and made ſuch an impreſſion on me, that I was ſcarcely able to ſpeak. I held her in my arms on the bed, where ſhe had thrown herſelf by me, when all at once I heard ſome one knock at the door, and at the ſame time heard a man's voice enquiring for me by my name. This voice, which I thought I knew, drew me from the ſituation I was in. I raiſed myſelf up to liſten, and then I perfectly diſtinguiſhed M. d'Ermancour's. But how could I believe it could be him? had I not ſeen the veſſel depart? and even ſuppoſing his remorſe had brought him back, how could he have found in a dark night, unleſs by a miracle, the way to my dwelling? Whilſt I was making theſe reflections, they knocked a third time, ſtill calling to me by my name, and ſaying many things which I could not diſtinguiſh, becauſe my bed was too far from the door. I tried to riſe, but was not able. "Ah my God, if it is M. d'Erman-" cour," ſaid I to Ninette, as ſhe tried to help me out of bed, "I ſhould

" then

" then die content, after having con-
" vinced him that I lived only for him.
" Go and ſee, my dear child; go to the
" door, and return quickly to tell me
" what you hear." She ran thither in ſpite of the terror ſhe was in. As for me, during this time, I raiſed myſelf on my elbow to try to hear what paſſed, but my agitation was ſo great that I could have comprehended nothing, if Ninette had not repeated aloud what was ſaid to her. " My dear mama," ſaid ſhe, " it is M. d'Ermancour, he ſays," and ſhe came nearer that I might hear her better. " It is this M. d'Erman-
" cour who has made you weep ſo
" much, and who frighted me in the
" wood when I was alone. It is he; he
" ſpeaks in the ſame voice. He ſaid
" to me, " My dear little girl open the
" door; I entreat you be not afraid, I
" will do you no harm. I am the
" friend of your mama; tell her, I am
" come to throw myſelf at her feet to
" aſk her pardon." I felt myſelf ſo ill at that inſtant, that I feared I ſhould

die

die without ſeeing him. "Ah, let him "come quickly, my dear," ſaid I to Ninette, "if he would ſee me before "I expire. Alas! I die!" To all appearance I did ſo; I remained a long time without ſenſe, and on opening my eyes found myſelf in the arms of my lover, who ſupported me in my bed, in order to recover my breath, after having given me a glaſs of water to drink, which he held in one hand, whilſt the other ſupported me. I can never be able to expreſs what I felt when I ſaw myſelf in this ſituation. I had no words at that time to ſpeak to M. d'Ermancour. Aſtoniſhment, pleaſure, ſhame, every different ſentiment, filled my heart. I made ſome efforts to diſengage myſelf from his arms; and I ſaw him fall immediately on his knees before me with a countenance ſo ſorrowful that I haſtened to preſent my hand to him, which he took trembling. He ſtammered out ſome words, but could not utter them, ſo much was he tranſported with joy; but he was preſently extremely

extremely concerned to find me in ſo ill a ſtate; he leaned his head on my hand, which he bathed with tears; mine alſo ran in abundance, and though I ſuffered ſo much by ſeeing him in this ſituation, I had not ſtrength enough to ſpeak to him. Ninette wept alſo, aſking me why I would not ſpeak to M. d'Ermancour; "He is much concerned," ſaid ſhe to me: "ſee, mama, how he "is grieved! My God, I wiſh I could "conſole him, for I like him exceed-"ingly; he will not do us any harm, "mama! Oh, no, I am not at all "afraid of him." On this M. d'Ermancour raiſed his head, and looking at me with eyes in which true repentance was painted,——"I muſt appear a mon-"ſter before my adorable Zelia, and "muſt inſpire her with horror." "You "ſee plainly it is otherwiſe," ſaid I, with a faint voice. "Alas! I am but "too happy, if you repent having ſu-"ſpected me." "Ah," ſaid he, "if I re-"pent! I would give my life to merit "the pardon which your goodneſs per-

"mits

" mits me to hope for."——" But," ſaid I, " upon what could you ground your " ſuſpicions?" " Upon one word, which " I ought to have interpreted otherwiſe, " rather than have accuſed my dear Zelia " of having deceived me; but I will " confeſs all my faults to you, when you " are in a little better ſtate to hear me." ——" Ah! your preſence," ſaid I, " has " obliterated every thing; pray tell me, " How is my father? Did he eſcape ſhip- " wreck? Shall I ſee him? Where is he? " And where is my governeſs?" I aſked all theſe queſtions with ſo much eagerneſs, and was ſo much agitated, that this tender lover entreated me to calm myſelf before he anſwered me. " It is ne- " ceſſary you ſhould take ſome nouriſh- " ment before I proceed further," ſaid he; " you appear very weak." I aſked for a little broth, which Ninette had got for me, and begged him to give it me. Alas! his emotion was ſtill ſo great, that his hands trembled in preſenting it to me; I drank it up, and thanked him for it, ſaying, I found it very good; it really

really was ſo, and I thought it of ſervice to me. I found myſelf juſt after this ſo very much oppreſſed, that I begged to be left a few minutes to compoſe myſelf, and at the ſame time told Ninette to give M. d'Ermancour ſomething to eat. She gave him what ſhe had; but though ſhe ſaid ſhe was not afraid of him, I ſaw that ſhe did not like to come too near him; he careſſed her much, which I encouraged, telling her he was my very good friend, and I would have him alſo be hers, which ſeemed to embolden her a little. While he was eating, he talked to her on the circumſtances of my illneſs. "From the day I ſaw you in the foreſt," ſaid ſhe to him, in ſo low a voice I could ſcarcely hear her, "mama has done no-"thing but weep, and be ſick; ſhe "thought many times of dying, and "always ſaid of M. d'Ermancour, What "have I done that he ſhould treat me ſo "cruelly?—and many other things which "I do not remember." M. d'Ermancour was ſo affected that he mixed his tears with the morſel he was eating. I

ſaw

ſaw him from my bed, when the languiſhing ſtate I was in permitted me to look at him. I often met his eyes, that ſeemed to demand pardon, which he thought he could never deſerve. What delightful moments were the preſent in compariſon of thoſe which I had hitherto paſſed! "It is really him," ſaid I to myſelf, looking at his charming features, on which his noble mind was pictured. "Yes, it is he himſelf! how well do I "remember that mouth, which has ſo "often ſwore he adored me; he never "deceived me; he has always loved me; "what injuſtice have I done him, in the "reproaches I have made him! Alas! "he is much leſs culpable than I am!" I had an extreme pleaſure in excuſing him to my own heart, before I heard his defence; however, I much wiſhed to interrogate him on a thouſand things which I could not comprehend. But when he returned to me, I could gain nothing from him but tears and ſighs, which ſtill increaſed on my giving him marks of the moſt tender affection. "Stop, adorable "Zelia,"

" Zelia," ſaid he, as ſoon as he could ſpeak; " your kindneſs aggravates my " crime; I am not worthy this generous " heart which I ſo cruelly treated. You " will hate me, and even deteſt me, " when you learn that I was ſo unjuſt as " to accuſe you of having deceived me. " Ninette was the conſequence of the " infidelity which my troubled ima- " gination ſuppoſed you guilty of; and " to complete my horror, I was vile " enough to form a ſcheme of abandon- " ing you, after having ſworn the death " of my rival. Behold, divine Zelia, " the wretch you ſee before you, and in " whom you take ſo much intereſt! Ah, " if I do not die with ſhame at your " feet, it is becauſe I wait till you con- " demn me. Say but the word, my " dear Zelia, and I will die without mur- " muring, if I can but perſuade you in " my laſt moments that I have lived " only for you, and that in ſpite of " my injuſtice I have never ceaſed a " ſingle moment to adore you." My face was bathed in tears, and my

heart ſo oppreſſed I could make him no reply. I took his hand and preſſed it to my heart. This proof of my tenderneſs was more perſuaſive than any thing I could have ſaid. "Ah, I ſhall not "die!" ſaid he, looking at me with the utmoſt degree of affection. "My dear "Zelia does not wiſh to ſee me expire. "No, ſhe ſtill loves me; I perceived it "in thoſe beautiful eyes which I ſo "much adore; I heard it from that "lovely mouth which never expreſſed "any thing but the ſentiments of her "heart. Could ſhe but ſee what paſſes "in mine, did ſhe but know what I "ſuffer from ſeeing her in the ſituation "to which I fear I have reduced her by my "unjuſt ſuſpicions! Alas, I have been "able to afflict her, even to the making "her ill; it is I have done this, who "would give my life to ſave her's! No, "I can never acquit myſelf of this un-"worthy action, even were my deareſt "Zelia ſo good as to give me her par-"don."——"Not only do I pardon "you," ſaid I to him, "but I promiſe "to

" to forget entirely thoſe faults with
" which you reproach yourſelf; let them
" never more be mentioned; let us not
" mix ſorrows with the happineſs we
" now enjoy. All my wiſhes are com-
" pleted, ſince you are living, and I ſee
" you again. Tell me how you ſur-
" vived this fatal ſhipwreck. And my
" father—may I thank Heaven for hav-
" ing alſo ſpared his precious life?——
" Your troubled countenance, and thoſe
" tears which I perceive ready to eſcape
" from your eyes, anſwer me but too
" plainly. I ſhall never ſee him more.
" Unhappy victim to the felicity of thy
" daughter! My father, deign to par-
" don me! Look down from Heaven,
" and hear my complaints and my ſor-
" rows!"——" Affectionate child," re-
plied M. d'Ermancour, eagerly inter-
rupting me, " weep, for the beſt of
" fathers, but do not accuſe yourſelf as
" the cauſe of his death. It is an in-
" juſtice which is painful to me, and
" your father himſelf would not pardon
" it if he heard you. Do not aggravate

" your grief, by reproaching yourſelf
" with faults you have not. You only
" obeyed the will of a father, and the
" entreaties of a lover. It is I who
" ought to be accuſed, if you would
" ſeek out the guilty."——" No, no,
" my dear and generous friend," ſaid I,
interrupting him in my turn, " I ſhall
" never ſeek after any thing but to do
" you juſtice. I ſhall ever regard you
" as the moſt amiable of men. I ſhall
" never forget your noble proceedings
" towards me, and ſhall always remem-
" ber the proofs you have now given me
" of your tender attachment. But tell
" me, by what miracle Heaven has pre-
" ſerved you for the happineſs of my
" life, and how you was able to find out
" a habitation ſo deſolate as mine, which
" I thought inacceſſible to all man-
" kind?" " The God of Heaven,"
ſaid he, looking at me with tenderneſs,
" has preſerved my life; and the God
" of Love has brought me to your
" preſence. But it was not that bene-
" volent divinity who filled me with

" thoſe

" thoſe unjuſt ſuſpicions which I ſuf-
" fered the moſt virtuous of women to
" perceive. Ah, I can never, never
" pardon myſelf this horrible injuſtice.
" I ſhall never think myſelf entitled to
" thoſe ſentiments of gratitude which
" you ſhew me. Alas, what did I do,
" when I came near you? By my furious
" jealouſy I cruelly wounded a tender
" and innocent heart, which I ought
" never to have ſuſpected of inconſtancy.
" I embittered the moſt delightful mo-
" ment of my life, by repulſing with
" rudeneſs the miſtreſs of my heart,
" who came with confidence to throw
" herſelf into my arms. Say not
" one word by way of juſtification,
" lovely Zelia," added he, ſtopping me at the firſt word I was going to utter, and ſhewing him the infant of Mademoiſelle de Lizadie, " It is this innocent
" child," I was going to ſay to him,
" who occaſioned all the evil with which
" you reproach yourſelf: it is ſhe who
" gave birth to an error which I en-
" treat you to forget, as I do myſelf."

" Ah, I ought to have recollected," replied he, " the hiſtory of your tender " friend, and retraced her features in " this infant's countenance, if the agi- " tation and trouble of my ſoul had not " blinded me; ſhe has the ſame lovely " perſon; the ſweet child is a true por- " trait of her mother. But I ought not " to mention her: the tears which I ſaw " fall from your eyes, have confirmed " me in my idea, and from what I have " already learnt——" " How did you " know—who could inform you of " the death of my unhappy friend?" " Yourſelf, charming Zelia; it was " you who acquainted me with the " death of your dear companion, by de- " claring to Ninette, that you were not " her real mother."——" What, did " you hear me? Ah! how was it? Which " way could—" " Through this win- " dow," ſaid he, pointing to that which was neareſt my bed; " it was by that " I was fully undeceived."——" Ah, " M. d'Ermancour, what is it you tell " me! What, then, I do not owe your

" return

" return to me, to the tenderneſs of " your heart? It is not your remorſe " which has juſtified me in your opi- " nion?"—I was going on, when I heard a noiſe at the door. I looked on M. d'Ermancour with aſtoniſhment. " Do " not be afraid," ſaid he; " it is my " ſervant, whom I left a few paces from " your habitation; it is my faithful Je- " rome. Will you permit him to come " in?" " Certainly," ſaid I, with eager- neſs. " Is he the only one of your peo- " ple who was ſaved with you?" " I " have none but him," ſaid he, going to open the door for the poor fellow, whom I was delighted to ſee again; and as to him, he was never tired of look- ing at me. He threw himſelf on his knees at his entrance, to admire, and to felicitate his maſter and himſelf with the happineſs of having found me again. " What a bleſſing!" ſaid he, weeping with joy. " We are now at the end of our " troubles. How dreadful have they been " to my poor maſter! Ah, Madam, how " has he regretted you! What grief has

" purſued him ſince your ſhocking ſe-
" paration, and even after he had found
" you again! I have ſeen him tormented
" with ſuſpicion, which doubtleſs was
" ill-grounded, ſince I ſee nothing here
" but tranquillity and ſatisfaction. God
" be praiſed, I am now happy and con-
" tented." I took his hand to ſhew my gratitude, and then bid him go and repoſe himſelf. He took my hand, and put it to his forehead, in token of reſpect. During this, Ninette (who was more afraid of Jerome than of M. d'Ermancour, becauſe he had a large beard) had concealed herſelf behind the curtains of the bed, from whence ſhe never came out till ſhe ſaw this good man depart. Her moving made a ruſtling, which Jerome hearing, he turned about, and expreſſed his ſurpriſe and admiration at ſeeing the beautiful child of whom his maſter had ſpoken to him, but whoſe real hiſtory he was ſtill ignorant of; he thought ſhe was my child, becauſe M. d'Ermancour had ſaid ſo. The latter, perceiving the fright Ninette was in,

went

went into the next room with Jerome, to give her time to recover herſelf, and at the ſame time to tell him the name of the real mother of this little girl, whom he ſeemed to look on with ſo much aſtoniſhment. I made uſe of this time to encourage my little companion. I told her, I was ſurpriſed to ſee her more afraid of Jerome than ſhe had been of his maſter. "He is a "man," ſaid I, "like M. d'Erman-"cour, equally good, and equally ci-"vil."——"Oh, mama, this Jerome "is very ugly: if he is a man, why is "he like a great beaſt?" "I know "not, my dear child, how it is you find "him ſo ugly; I tell you he is like moſt "other men." "Like moſt others?" ſaid ſhe, quickly; "but he is not like "the firſt. If he is a man, it is of an-"other ſort." "No, my love, he is "of the ſame kind as his maſter: the "only difference between them is, that "one is young, and the other old." "What, will M. d'Ermancour ever be-"come as ugly as Jerome, as black as he "is? and will he have a great beard

" like him? Ah mama, it is not poſſi-
" ble!" M. d'Ermancour, returning at that moment, heard theſe laſt words. " I was afraid," ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to me, " that Mademoiſelle Ni-
" nette would be frightened at Jerome's
" beard. I am very lucky not to have
" ſuch a one, for you would not have
" let me in," added he, looking at the child. " But mama would have received
" you, Sir," ſaid ſhe, " ſince ſhe is not
" afraid of Jerome." " Well, Made-
" moiſelle, do not be afraid; you ſhall
" not ſee this vile beard again." " So
" much the better," ſaid ſhe, thinking alſo that the man himſelf was gone. I was myſelf aſtoniſhed to ſee Jerome with ſo long a beard, and demanded an explanation. " When you learn," ſaid M. d'Ermancour, " that we have not
" been in any ſociety ſince our ſepa-
" ration, and that we have not been
" far from your habitation ſince that
" fatal moment, you will not be
" aſtoniſhed to ſee us both appear like
" ſavages."—" What, were you near
" me when I lamented your loſs, when

" I

" I deſpaired of ever ſeeing you again?
" You were then a prey to the ſame regret,
" and we did not hear each other! But
" how have you ſubſiſted ſo long in this
" Deſert, where probably you had not
" the ſame reſources that I had? Ah,
" gracious Providence!" cried I, raiſing my eyes and hands to Heaven, " how
" impenetrable are your ſecrets!——
" But explain to me, I conjure you,
" what I cannot comprehend, by ſeeing
" you freſh and healthy and well
" dreſſed. How was you able to exiſt
" in this Deſert without ſhelter, and
" where you could only find wild fruits
" for your food? How have you pre-
" ſerved your health and your apparel?"
" I will not tell you," ſaid he, " that
" the hope of meeting with you again
" has been the cauſe of this miracle, for
" I have a long time deſpaired of it.
" However, as I was not entirely con-
" vinced of your death, a faint hope
" has ſupported me hitherto. With
" planks, nails, and a little labour,
" aſſiſted by Jerome, we were able to

" procure ourſelves a retreat, convenient
" enough to keep us from the rain and
" other injuries of the weather. We
" found in the wreck of the veſſel pro-
" viſions to eat, which we have pre-
" ſerved a long time, and which have
" been our grand reſource; for the biſ-
" cuit (of which we had a large quan-
" tity), the flour, and, above all, the
" corn which I had the precaution to
" ſow the firſt years of our reſidence in
" this iſle, have ſupported our wretched
" lives till now; as to clothes, I found
" enough in the coffers which the ſea
" threw on the ſhore. This was the way
" I at firſt was able to ſupport my ſad
" fate; but when I ſaw the years run on
" without diſcovering any trace of your
" exiſtence, I was wholly diſcouraged,
" and then found out all the horror of
" my ſituation. I was carried about by
" deſpair, melancholy, and wearineſs;
" and, but for the attentions and aſſiſt-
" ance of my faithful Jerome, I ſhould
" not this day have enjoyed the delight-
" ful pleaſure of ſeeing you and hearing
" you.

" you. I ſhould ſtill be in doubt of " my happineſs, were I to loſe ſight of " you for a moment. Ah! never ſend " me from your preſence, adorable Ze- " lia!" ſaid he, leaning towards my bed, and looking at me attentively, as if he wanted to be aſſured it was actually the perſon he ſo long had ſought, and had deſpaired of finding again. " Yes!" ſaid he, after this tender examination, " it is my lovely Zelia! the purity of " her mind has preſerved thoſe beautiful " and delicate features in all their per- " fection. It is ſhe!" added he, approaching with timidity and kiſſing my hand, which lay on the bed. " Ah! " leave me this dear hand," ſaid he; thinking, by a little motion I made without any intention, I meant to withdraw it; " leave me to pour out my heart on " this precious pledge, which the moſt " worthy of fathers beſtowed on me. " It was mine by your own conſent, it " would be ſo ſtill if——" " Ah, do " not doubt it," ſaid I; " you are, and " ſhall ever be, the friend and the lord

" of

" of my heart. Whatever may be my
" deſtiny, for the future it ſhall ever be
" inſeparable from yours. I will follow
" you every where. I will expoſe my-
" ſelf to the greateſt dangers, if it is
" neceſſary to deliver you from the
" wretched ſituation in which my mis-
" fortune has plunged you. Say, ten-
" der and generous friend, have you
" any views, any favourable hopes?"
——" All my hopes, and the happineſs
" of my whole life, are in your heart,
" adorable Zelia. I have no other
" ſchemes, no other wiſhes, but to
" pleaſe you ſufficiently, ſo as to be
" able to ſoften by my preſence the ri-
" gour of your deſtiny; not being able
" to change it, I would ſhare it with
" you. I have but badly explained my-
" ſelf, if any thing I have been ſaying
" has given you any flattering expecta-
" tions. Alas! I have only my life to
" offer you, which I have preſerved
" with the ſole view of dedicating it to
" your ſervice; diſpoſe of it as you
" pleaſe; that and my heart are wholly
" yours.

" yours. You have deeply wounded " that heart, my dear Zelia, by ſuſpecting " it of the blackeſt ingratitude. What, " do you think that I ſhould not have " returned to you, if I had not found " means to enlighten my doubts? Do " not think ſo; but acquit me of this " injuſtice, which, however, I confeſs I " merited, ſince I was able for a moment " to doubt of your conſtancy; but I " repented as ſuddenly as I had been " guilty: aſk this faithful ſervant, to " whom I opened my heart on quitting " you." Jerome, who came in that inſtant, and was impatient to juſtify his maſter, deſired me to permit him to acquaint me with many things which concerned us both, and alſo to inform me of many circumſtances which his maſter, through modeſty, could not have told ſo well as himſelf; he told me I ſhould not repent liſtening to him. " I ſhall " always hear you with pleaſure," ſaid I to him, " and ſhall alſo aſk you a " thouſand queſtions, which I am very " impatient to know. But I ſhall not

" aſk

" aſk them to-day, becauſe you have " need of reſt; go therefore to bed. And " for you," ſaid I to M. d'Ermancour, when Jerome was retired; " you little " know my heart, and my opinion of " you, if you think I require any other " proof of your ſentiments, than " that which you yourſelf have given " me: forgive me, and forget the un- " juſt reproach which I made you, my " dear and faithful friend; and I will " never ſuppoſe you meant abſolutely " to abandon me. In the midſt of my " grief I always preſerved a hope that " you would return to me. This dear " friend," ſaid I, ſometimes, " knows " me too well; his tender heart will re- " proach him with injuſtice; he will " lament it when he grows more calm. " —But alas, he will not find me again! " I ſhall not be in a ſtate to hear him, " when his repentance brings him back." " What cruel ideas are theſe which you " point out to me! a poniard through " my heart would wound it leſs; they ag- " gravate my fault, and bring forth my

" tears.

" tears. Ah, my deareſt love, do not
" tell me all the pain I have given you;
" I feel but too deeply the enormity of
" my crime."—" It is not a crime with
" which I reproach you, my good friend,"
" ſaid I; " do not accuſe yourſelf too
" ſeverely; your offence was owing to
" too much delicacy. Appearances
" alſo were againſt me; you knew not
" that my unhappy friend was with child,
" when we were ſeparated. You could
" not foreſee that I ſhould adopt her
" child, and that ſhe would call me
" her mother. Theſe circumſtances,
" which could not be divined, muſt
" have wounded your ſenſibility in the
" firſt moments; but had you returned
" and allowed yourſelf to aſk me for an
" explanation, all would in a moment
" have been terminated." " Ah, I
" ought not to have believed my eyes,"
ſaid he, looking at me; " but had I had
" the moſt convincing aſſurances, not
"all the reaſons which could have
" been given me, would then have
" been able to perſuade me; yet you

" are

" aſk them to-day, becauſe you have " need of reſt; go therefore to bed. And " for you," ſaid I to M. d'Ermancour, when Jerome was retired; " you little " know my heart, and my opinion of " you, if you think I require any other " proof of your ſentiments, than " that which you yourſelf have given " me: forgive me, and forget the un- " juſt reproach which I made you, my " dear and faithful friend; and I will " never ſuppoſe you meant abſolutely " to abandon me. In the midſt of my " grief I always preſerved a hope that " you would return to me. This dear " friend," ſaid I, ſometimes, " knows " me too well; his tender heart will re- " proach him with injuſtice; he will " lament it when he grows more calm. " —But alas, he will not find me again! " I ſhall not be in a ſtate to hear him, " when his repentance brings him back." " What cruel ideas are theſe which you " point out to me! a poniard through " my heart would wound it leſs; they ag- " gravate my fault, and bring forth my " tears.

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" been given me, would then have
" been able to perſuade me; yet you

" are

" are good enough to leſſen my crime."
" —I would not only diminiſh it," ſaid I, " I would baniſh it entirely both " from your remembrance and my " own. Let it never be again mention- " ed," ſaid I, taking his hand, which I preſſed in mine. " Promiſe me, ſwear " to me by all that is moſt dear to you " in the world, that you will never re- " collect it." " I can only make this " oath," ſaid he, " on the lips of my " beloved." He then took me with tranſport in his arms; and ſaid, I could only be ſure of having recovered his heart, and he of obtaining my pardon, by this precious favour, which would confirm his own happineſs and aſſure him he could ſtill add to mine. " Ah," ſaid I, " I have never ceaſed to " love you;" laying my head on his ſhoulder, not daring to look at this tender lover, who was deſerving of all my gratitude, whilſt I abandoned my whole heart to him, which he had poſſeſſed ſo entirely for a long time. " I am wholly " yours," ſaid I, gently diſengaging myſelf

myſelf from his arms. " I belong to you " entirely; my heart knows you enough " to diſtinguiſh and to prefer you to all " I have ſeen in the world, where I " lived long enough not to regret any " thing but you, my generous friend, " you who appear to return ſo truly the " ſentiments of my heart, and have " quitted every thing to unite your deſ- " tiny with mine. Can you be con- " tented with what I have to offer you " here, a cabin, and a deſert?" I caſt my eyes on his, as I pronounced theſe two laſt ſad words. He anſwered with all the enthuſiaſm of the moſt tender affection; his noble and ſenſible heart was wounded by my doubt. " What," ſaid he, looking at me, " do you make " any queſtion of my happineſs, after " having announced it? Ah, divine Ze- " lia, you know not the value of the " prize you offer me! you know not " that the poſſeſſion of a heart like yours " is ſupreme felicity for me! your fine " eyes have never penetrated my heart, " if they haye not perceived in mine the

" only

" only desire of my soul. It is you, lovely " Zelia, you alone, whom I have sought: " it was your charming person which " enchanted me the first time I had the " happiness to see you; it was your sweet " and amiable temper, your tender and ge- " nerous heart, which I wished to deserve " by acting up to you. Partake then of " my happiness, adorable Zelia, since it " is your own work; and believe that my " destiny will ever be productive of " envy, if I am permitted to pass my " days with you in this agreeable soli- " tude. But tell me," added he, with- out waiting my answer, " tell me who " was the happy mortal you met with " on your arrival here: tell me what " is become of him, and how you passed " your time with him: describe his " person and his mind: your inti- " mate friendship with him makes it " very interesting. I long to hear from " your own mouth the minute history " of your society with this unknown, " whom necessity and gratitude must have " rendered very dear to you. Ah, why

" did

" did my misfortune ſeparate me from
" you for ſo long a time! why did not
" the ſtorm which threw you on theſe
" ſhores, envelope me in the ſame wave!
" you would then have received only from
" me that aſſiſtance which your unhap-
" py ſituation forced you to accept from
" a ſtranger. How ought he to bleſs
" the happy chance which cauſed his
" meeting with you! how do I envy the
" happineſs which your preſence muſt
" have given him! what pleaſure muſt
" he have felt, when he ſaw by his at-
" tentions peace revived in your mind!
" what delicious moments were thoſe
" which he paſſed in diſpelling your
" fears, in conſoling you, and perhaps
" in flattering himſelf that he might in
" time make you forget me! How I
" ſhould hate him, if I thought he had
" endeavoured to convince you of my
" death, and that he had ſought to con-
" ſole you under that event! Ah, tell
" me, charming Zelia, tell me whether
" I muſt hate him. That ſevere ſmile
" which I ſee on your lips gives me
" pain.

" pain. Why do you pleaſe your-
" ſelf with what puts me in deſpair, and
" leaves me in dreadful anxiety? Tell
" me at leaſt if he be yet living, if you
" again hope to ſee him, and wherefore
" he quitted this habitation, which he
" had taken ſo much pains to render con-
" venient and agreeable." " You are
" not ſufficiently acquainted with me
" yet," ſaid I, rather gravely, " ſince
" you force me to applaud myſelf, for
" having it in my power wholly to calm
" your fears. You will find, when you
" retire to your chamber, ſome papers
" on a table; read them; I willingly
" confide them to your diſcretion: they
" may perhaps contribute to your tran-
" quillity." I then entreated he would retire to reſt; obſerving to him that day-light began to appear. But he would not leave me, till after he had aſſured me many times, that he had no ſuſpicions capable of giving me offence; and that the great deſire which he had ſhewn for ſeeing this man, of whom we had been ſpeaking, ought neither to

diſpleaſe

diſpleaſe or ſurpriſe me, ſince what he wiſhed to be made acquainted with was extraordinary enough to excite the curioſity of the moſt indifferent perſon. " In ſhort," ſaid he, " how to com-
" prehend, without a kind of miracle,
" the meeting you again in ſuch a deſert
" place, ſurrounded by all the conve-
" niencies of life; how could I help
" imagining——" " You will find," ſaid I, interrupting him, " the expla-
" nation of all which aſtoniſhes you in
" thoſe papers I have told you of. They
" will acquaint you with the hiſtory of
" my life, from the time of our ſepara-
" tion; and all that thegood hermit told
" me of his own adventures ſome time
" before he died." " What, is he dead!
" Ah, my dear Zelia, I can aſſure you
" I am ſorry for it. I ſhould have
" had much pleaſure to have convinced
" him of my gratitude and my friend-
" ſhip, if I had found him worthy of it."
——" You would have found him wor-
" thy of it, no doubt, ſince I regret his
" loſs extremely," ſaid I. After this little

little explanation, which appeared to give him ſome ſatisfaction, he retired, in the hope, he ſaid, of not loſing ſight of me, ſince he was ſtill going to converſe with me.

He ſpent the reſt of the night in reading the papers which he found on the table, and which had completed his happineſs, as well by proving the injuſtice of his ſuſpicions, which he now found were groundleſs, as becauſe he learnt more of my affection for him than he had ever yet known from me; above all, he particularly dwelt on thoſe paſſages where, in the fulneſs of my heart, I had expreſſed my ſentiments without reſtraint. The name of dear lover, which he found in every page, delighted him. In all our converſations, I had never uſed that expreſſion. He had reproached me a thouſand times with my baſhfulneſs. "I can never believe that "you love me," ſaid he, at thoſe times, "whilſt you keep up that appearance "of reſtraint, which ſeems as if you were "afraid of me, and makes me quite un-

"happy."

" happy." I was ſorry to ſee he ſo ill interpreted my ſentiments of him; for in ſpite of the efforts I made to avoid his reproaches, I could not fix my eyes on his without bluſhing. I was diſconcerted at the ſmalleſt expreſſion of love; and much more ſo, when he came to me in the morning, and repeated to me with rapture all that was moſt flattering to him in the papers he had been reading. He was ſo much enchanted with it, that for ſome time he did not perceive the confuſion I was in; but as ſoon as he ſaw it he ſtopped. " Do not be diſpleaſed " with me, deareſt Zelia," ſaid he, bending on his knees before me with a moſt engaging air; " do not envy me " the delicious pleaſure with which I " am intoxicated; but ſuffer me to re- " gard myſelf as the happieſt of mortals." —" Give me back my papers, Sir," ſaid I, holding out my hand for them; and making him no other reply. He ran for them, and gave them to me with an air of concern. I pretended not to obſerve it; and in order to prevent coming to

any explanation on what had juſt paſſed between us, I enquired after his health; inſtead of making me any reply, he ſuddenly left the room, in order to conceal his chagrin. I was miſerable at having occaſioned it; and if I had obeyed the dictates of my heart, I ſhould have gone after him, and on my knees entreated his pardon; but a little reflection prevented me. I was more than ever afraid to diſcover to him the ſmalleſt weakneſs; on the contrary, it was neceſſary to begin early to accuſtom myſelf to put on an air of reſerve and reſolution, which might guard me from all I had to fear in ſo intimate a ſociety. My habitation was become a delightful place in my opinion. It was no longer a deſert, and much leſs a priſon; it was rather an enchanted dwelling. I cannot tell how to expreſs the pleaſure I felt in walking out the firſt time with M. d'Ermancour. But if the reader recollects the many walks I had taken by myſelf, with deſpair in my heart, he will not wonder at the kind of enthuſiaſm with which I found

found myſelf inſpired. Every object which ſurrounded me not only ſeemed to be adorned by the preſence of my lover, but appeared in my eyes to have taken a new exiſtence. In ſhort, every thing ſeemed more animated: even the birds, who formerly ſeemed to bewail my fate in their plaintive ſongs, now had a more lively tone, as if they took part in my pleaſures. The paths in the midſt of the foreſt, which often terrified me by their obſcurity when I was alone, were now, that I walked in them with my lover, become avenues to the moſt delightful woods; and that obſcurity which I had once feared, was an agreeable and gentle ſhade, which inſpired tenderneſs, and ſeemed formed to pleaſe two hearts ſo intimately allied as ours were.

M. d'Ermancour, animated by the ſame ideas, never ceaſed to admire the beauty of theſe charming walks. "Every thing I ſee here," ſaid he, "enchants me, and pro-
"miſes me the greateſt felicity. Are
"you, my dear Zelia, as ſenſible as I am
"to the happineſs that awaits us? May

" I flatter myſelf you will enjoy the ſame " pleaſure that I do? Say, my adored " companion, ſhall we not be the hap- " pieſt of mortals?" " Can you doubt " it," ſaid I, " ſince we are again " united? My heart never formed " another wiſh; nor would you ever " have ſuſpected it, had you been ſen- " ſible of my grief in this ſolitude." " I have ſeen the proofs of that tenderneſs " written by that dear hand," ſaid he, kiſſing it with tranſport. " Why does " my dear, my faithful friend, deprive " me of thoſe precious proofs of her af- " fection? Does ſhe fear I do not merit " ſuch a favour? or does ſhe think me " baſe enough ever to abuſe the diſpoſi- " tion of her heart? No, my dear " Zelia, do me not ſo much injuſtice. " I ſhould be unworthy of the ſacred " tie which is to unite us, were I ca- " pable of ever failing in reſpect to the " moſt virtuous of women. Could you " ever ſuſpect the contrary?" ſaid he, ſtopping and looking at me. " That air " of conſtraint, and thoſe bluſhes which

" cover

" cover your beautiful face, prove it. " You have feared, and you ſtill fear " perhaps, that I ſhall abuſe the liberty " which this ſolitude might give me: " How little do you know me, my dear " and too lovely Zelia!" This reproach which I merited, and which I had made to myſelf, covered me with ſhame and confuſion. He diſcovered by my looks what paſſed in my mind. " Is it ne- " ceſſary," ſaid he, " to take heaven " to witneſs for me, in order to convince " you of the purity of my intentions? " I ſwear at your feet, divine Zelia, al- " ways to reſpect your virtue, to ſtifle " every ſentiment which might wound " your delicacy: Yes, in ſpite of that vio- " lent paſſion you have inſpired me with, " and though it were to coſt me my life, be " aſſured there is nothing I am not ca- " pable of doing, in order to gain your " confidence. Look on me in future, " beauteous Zelia, as your moſt faithful " and ſubmiſſive friend; and in this " quality I entreat on my knees the " permiſſion to paſs my days with you.'

" I agree to it," ſaid I, throwing myſelf into his arms; " receive from " this moment your friend, and your " faithful companion." I could ſay no more; tears of affection burſt from my eyes, and eaſed the oppreſſion of my heart. I reproached myſelf with my unjuſt ſuſpicions as if they were criminal. I acknowledged all my fears to him, which he had but too plainly obſerved. He ſpoke to me in a manner ſo affecting, and deſcribed his ſentiments with ſo much delicacy, that he inſpired me with the greateſt confidence, and a kind of reſpect which deceived us both. We ſwore to each other an eternal and true friendſhip, taking heaven to witneſs to our oaths, and ſubmitting ourſelves to all its rigours, ſhould we ever be ſo unhappy as to change. Alas, at that moment we were dupes to our own hearts! Love had gained too much empire there for us to hope ſuch a change. M. d'Ermancour, a moment after he had made theſe fine proteſtations, ſeemed to wiſh to recall them. He begged me to obſerve, that in accepting the title of my friend, he had not renounced

nounced that of my lover and my huſband: that he would always reſerve to himſelf the right of pretending to thoſe titles, and conjured me not to deprive him of a hope ſo flattering. I looked at him with a ſmile, and gave him my hand; but ſeeing he was not content with this ſign of my approbation, I faithfully promiſed to be his. M. d'Ermancour was delighted, and embraced me with ſo much tranſport, that he perceived his impropriety before I had time to reproach him; and directly after I ſaw him on his knees before me, he having quitted me in a kind of terror. The pain and confuſion which theſe various emotions gave me, put me in a ſtate little different from his. I ſaw him at my feet, without being able to ſay a word; he was alſo as ſilent as myſelf. But how expreſſive was the attitude he was in, and the tears which fell from his eyes! Reſpectful lovers, what empire have you over a tender heart! I felt at that inſtant, all the weakneſs of mine. M. d'Ermancour repenting at at my feet, was more the object of my

fears, than in the exceſs of his paſſion. The fault which he had been guilty of one minute, ſeemed to me to be repaired the inſtant he acknowledged it. I looked upon him from that moment as a noble and generous lover, who had made a ſacrifice to my virtue; and with theſe ſentiments I advanced towards him, and gave him my hand. "You are always my "moſt worthy friend," ſaid I to him, preſſing his hand, which I found ſtill trembled. This expreſſion of tenderneſs encreaſed his tears and confuſion, and he went ſuddenly into the thickeſt part of the wood, perhaps to conceal from me this little inſtance of weakneſs. How was I moved by this ſenſibility! I was very far from enjoying that empire which I appeared to have over him. Alas, my own heart was perhaps at that moment weaker than his; and my virtue might have given way to my tenderneſs, if another ſentiment had not withheld me. The fear of appearing deſpicable in the eyes of my lover reſtored to me all my reſolution.

I ſaw

I ſaw M. d'Ermancour preſently return with Ninette in his hand, which greatly contributed to give him an air more aſſured as he approached me. Before we quitted the Shady Walk, which was the name I gave to the place we were in, I ſaw him cut off a branch of a tree and plant it in the ſpot where we had contracted our engagements. I eaſily gueſſed his intentions, by recollecting that he had ſworn in his enthuſiaſm to conſecrate this place to love. It will be ſeen by what follows, that it was made uſe of to celebrate a moſt ſolemn and religious ceremony. I did not aſk an explanation of what I had ſeen, for fear of renewing the ſcene which had paſſed: but it kept me awake the whole night, when I reflected on the danger I had run. How ſhould I have dared to appear before him, ſaid I, if he had abuſed the moment of weakneſs in which I yeſterday found myſelf! How could I have ſupported the preſence of a man who would have had a right to deſpiſe me! And even could I have believed

M. d'Ermancour generous enough not to impute as a crime, the error he would have made me commit, how ſhould I conceal it from my own heart, which would never ceaſe to reproach me with it! Life on thoſe terms would be more inſupportable than even in the time of my misfortunes. Nor could my lover enjoy the ſame ſatisfaction which we hoped our union would afford us, if he did not reſpect me as well as he loved me. But who could preſerve us from the danger we ſhould continually be expoſed to? How were we to avoid thoſe opportunities, which had nearly proved fatal to us yeſterday? Muſt I deprive myſelf of the pleaſure of telling my lover he was dear to me? And even had I power enough over my own heart to prevent my repeating thoſe expreſſions which afforded him ſo much joy; might he not read in my eyes, that which made his felicity as well as mine? Ah, it was then in the heart of my lover I muſt ſeek for fortitude. It is the purity of his mind which will preſerve my virtue. I have no other

guardian but his noble and generous ſoul, which has already given me proofs of the empire he has over his own paſſions. I ſhould intereſt him ſtill more in diſcovering to him my weakneſs. I knew enough of M. d'Ermancour, to be certain he would not abuſe my confidence; but how ſhould I dare to tell him, what I could not without ſhame acknowledge to myſelf? Theſe and a thouſand other reflections, which are too numerous to relate, did not permit me to cloſe my eyes for one inſtant: yet theſe troubles were ſlight in compariſon with thoſe which had formerly afflicted my heart. I had no longer thoſe melancholy and gloomy ideas which had ſo often filled me with fear and terror. I had no longer any of thoſe bitter regrets or lamentations on my wretched deſtiny. Thoſe frightful reflections to which the night always adds horror no longer took poſſeſſion of my heart, which was affected by a more agreeable ſentiment. I had again found my lover, at a time when I moſt deſpaired of ſeeing him again. He was

now in the ſame houſe with me, always near me. I ſhall ſee him to-morrow, ſaid I, I ſhall hear his voice, I ſhall diſcover the joy of his heart by his eyes when I bid him good morning; he will read the ſame in mine; he will ſee that I adore him. Ah, I can never refuſe him this confeſſion which he ſo juſtly merits. Wiſdom, duty, virtue, how cruel are you if you condemn theſe pleaſures! I cannot believe it; no, they are not cenſurable, ſince Heaven, in conducting my lover hither, has ſeemed to approve them. This idea, which my heart dwelt upon, calmed my uneaſineſs; and the following letter, which I wrote to M. d'Ermancour, entirely put an end to it:

" You will doubtleſs be ſurpriſed to
" receive a letter on your awakening:
" I ſee beforehand the aſtoniſhment it
" gives you, and I hear from hence the
" queſtions you put to the little meſ-
" ſenger who brings it you. But fear
" not, my beloved friend, I am not
" going to reproach you; you do not
" deſerve

" deſerve it and the amiable qualities
" of your mind give me hopes you
" never will. It is with this aſſurance
" I am going to open my heart to you:
" that heart, which you poſſeſs entirely,
" and whoſe happineſs depends on being
" yours, is not at eaſe, it is agitated
" by fears. Ah, if it is true, as you
" have many times aſſured me, that
" your felicity depends on mine, would
" you diſturb it?—No, you would not.
" As a proof of it, I have your promiſes,
" and thoſe which paſſed yeſterday. But
" ſhall you always be maſter enough of
" yourſelf to repreſs tranſports too violent?
" Ought not I, in order to prevent
" them, to conceal a part of that tender-
" neſs with which you have inſpired me?
" Alas! what will it not coſt me, if I
" muſt impoſe this ſevere law on my
" heart! Could I execute it, if I would?
" No; I ſhould in vain make the at-
" tempt. This heart, which you have
" already accuſtomed ſo frequently to
" tell you it loves you, would feel it,
" and would betray me inſtantly. You

" ſee,

" ſee, after the confidence I place in
" you, what you would riſk by abuſing
" it. Conſider well, and reflect ſeri-
" ouſly. It is to my worthy friend I
" confeſs my tenderneſs. It is to his
" generous heart I confide myſelf. What
" reproaches would he not have to make
" himſelf, if, attending only to his paſ-
" ſion, he ſhould diſturb his own hap-
" pineſs as well mine! Have I only
" then croſſed ſuch an extent of ocean,
" you would ſay, in order to augment
" the miſeries of her whom only I can
" love! Have I then renounced the
" whole univerſe, to diſhonour the com-
" panion which my heart has choſen!
" Every thing in that caſe would change
" its appearance: our ſolitude would
" become a melancholy dungeon,
" where I ſhould ardently wiſh to con-
" ceal my ſhame. What a frightful ſi-
" tuation, in compariſon with that of two
" virtuous hearts, who enjoy without
" remorſe the pleaſure of loving and
" being beloved, and telling each other
" ſo. Every place to ſuch is a ſcene of
" delight.

" delight. To be abandoned by the
" whole world adds to their felicity,
" by the freedom which they enjoy
" without reſtraint; no uneaſineſs, no
" cares torment them; every day the
" ſun riſes clear and ſerene for them:
" they only regret the time of night
" which ſeparates them; but are amply
" made amends by the double pleaſure
" which they enjoy when they meet again
" next morning. Such is our ſituation,
" my deareſt friend; ſuch the happineſs
" we poſſeſs, and which I ſo much fear
" to loſe. It is in order to preſerve it
" always, that I confide in my beſt be-
" loved; and notwithſtanding the de-
" licacy of the taſk I impoſe on him, I
" dare to hope he will not reject it: No,
" he will never forget what he owes to
" the tender confeſſion I am going to
" make him. He will be my guardian
" and my friend, whilſt in expectation
" of being my huſband. It is under
" ſhelter of theſe reſpectable titles that
" I ſhall live without reſtraint with my
" lover; on theſe conditions, which I

" impoſe

" impoſe on him for the laſt time, I " ſhall yield without ſcruple to the ſoft " impulſe of my heart; I ſhall feel it " palpitate with joy on the firſt appear- " ance of daylight which will announce " to me the awakening of my friend: " and he, on opening his eyes, will " think of me. May the charms of in- " nocence and eſtimable virtue fill his " heart with that delicious pleaſure by " which mine is agitated! May he " come with theſe ſentiments, to ſearch " out his dear companion and friend, " who waits for him with the anxiety " of a lover, to ſee him confirm all " theſe titles by a tender kiſs."

I ſent this letter by Ninette, as ſoon as ſhe was up. A moment after, ſhe brought me a letter from my lover. This ſuddenneſs ſurpriſed me the more, as I ſaw, on opening it, it was written on all ſides the paper; and only at the end, in few words, the anſwer to mine. It will be ſeen by this letter, that M. d'Erman-

cour

cour had not paſſed the night with ſuch tranquillity as I ſuppoſed.

" WHILST my divine Zelia enjoys the " pleaſures of a ſoft and tranquil ſlumber, " and that the peace of her mind pre- " pares her to awake with joy, mine " is agitated with love and inquietude. " It is with fear and trembling that I dare " to recollect the tenderneſs of my be- " loved Zelia. I fear ſtill more to of- " fend her by expreſſing my delight at " the remembrance of it. How have I " been able to offend her, who reſpect " even her ſhadow; who would give " my life even to merit her confidence! " I have riſked the loſs of it, at the very " time when I ſwore to preſerve it for " ever. How would ſhe in future " have depended on my promiſes, if I " had given her reaſon to diſtruſt me? " Alas! I am but too well convinced " of it. Yes, ſhe has been ſenſible of my " imprudent weakneſs; ſhe is now afraid " of me; ſhe dreads again to ſee thoſe " tranſports which terrified her in my " arms.

" arms. I felt her tremble, and I ſaw
" in her eyes the cauſe of her fears.
" That ſentiment which I did not think
" of inſpiring, whilſt it drew me from
" my enchantment, conveyed a dreadful
" terror to my heart. How has one
" ſingle look been able to give me ſo
" much pain? No, a mere mortal
" could never have gained ſo much em-
" pire over a heart, as my divine Zelia
" has over mine. I ſtill hear that
" dear voice ſwearing to me an eternal
" affection. I ſee her throw herſelf
" with confidence into my arms, to aſ-
" ſure me by a kiſs of the ſincerity of
" her promiſes: what a delightful mo-
" ment! I ſhall never forget it, not-
" withſtanding the deep concern which
" it occaſions me; at this moment I ſtill
" feel on my burning lips the im-
" preſſion of that tender kiſs. What
" warmth did her ſweet breath carry to
" my heart: I am even now affected by
" the bare remembrance of it. Ah,
" Zelia! cruel Zelia! do you call the
" tender affection you have inſpired me

" with,

" with, a crime? Muſt I then be in-
" ſenſible to ſo many attractions? muſt
" I ceaſe to adore you, or to tell you ſo?
" Could you, my lovely friend, impoſe
" ſo ſevere a law upon me? I cannot
" believe it. No, you would not make
" me periſh with grief: You would not
" hate me. You have told me you love
" me; I have ſeen it in thoſe charming
" eyes, which I adore; and I have felt
" it in my heart. Allow me, deareſt
" Zelia, ſtill to believe it; do not afflict
" a heart which derives its happineſs
" from you; that heart which our fatal
" ſeparation had overwhelmed with grief,
" and which was ever wretched till we met
" again. It is ſtill worthy all your con-
" fidence. Come without fear to my
" arms, and aſſure me of it. Come,
" and enjoy your triumph, and the pro-
" found reſpect with which you have in-
" ſpired me. Do not imagine that I
" will ever yield to the blind impulſe of
" an ungovernable paſſion. No, I am
" ſenſible of ſtill greater and more de-
" lightful pleaſures which conſtitute my
" felicity. You who taught me to feel

" them

" them, and who knew ſo well how to
" convey them to my heart, teach me
" how to communicate to yours the flame
" which conſumes me. Ah, if I could
" convey but one ſpark of it, I ſhould
" be too happy! But whither have I ſuf
" fered myſelf to be tranſported! This
" burning fire—is it not an obſtacle to
" the ſoft and tranquil pleaſure which
" Zelia has promiſed me? Pardon me,
" beſt beloved, the wanderings of a heart
" which ſhall ever be entirely ſubmitted
" to thee. This moment your pardon
" is brought me, which only on my knees
" I ought to have obtained; with what
" goodneſs does this tender friend over-
" come my inquietudes; ſhe was then
" employed in proving her affection to
" me, at the time when I thought her in
" a ſweet ſlumber. This letter, which
" that dear hand has written, ſhall ne-
" ver be effaced from my heart: it ſhall
" be the guide and ſupport of him whom
" you honour with your confidence, and
" whom you call your friend. It ſhall
" confirm his happineſs to merit that

" precious

" precious title, till he arrives at that " of being thy huſband."

This letter, which I had read over many times, and always with encreaſed tenderneſs, was ſtill in my hand, when M. d'Ermancour came into my chamber without my perceiving it. " I " ſhall never be ſo happy," ſaid I, ſighing, " as to give him proofs of this love, " which he ſo well merits." Theſe words, which he heard, made him throw himſelf at my feet; which ſo much ſurpriſed me, that I was for ſome time in great confuſion. " Ah, " do not repent," ſaid he, with an air equally tender and reſpectful. " Never " more think, my dear friend, of thoſe " precious titles you have honoured me " with. Behold at your feet the faithful " friend you have choſen." It was in this manner I enjoyed the charms of the moſt delicate love, under the name of tender friendſhip. Theſe two ſentiments with which our hearts were poſſeſſed, had the art of adorning all nature in our opinions,

opinions, and made every object in our habitation appear intereſting and pleaſing. M. d'Ermancour, though ſtill young, was endued with great knowledge; he had made the beſt uſe of thoſe years which the generality of young men loſe in diſſipation. Nothing appeared to him unworthy his attention. The productions of the foreſt, the ſhells on the ſea-ſhore, and the rocks, all excited his curioſity, and furniſhed him with ſubjects of ſtudy and contemplation. By communicating his obſervations to me, I ſoon acquired the ſame taſte. We every day employed ourſelves in ſearching for new objects; and theſe inſtructing exerciſes ſometimes led us ſo far into the foreſt, that we found a difficulty in recovering the road to our habitation. We every day returned more delighted with the ground we had been over: the farther we advanced into the foreſt, we found objects both uſeful and agreeable. All theſe treaſures, with which I was unacquainted before the arrival of M. d'Ermancour, though they were nevertheleſs at my diſ-

poſal,

poſal, excited my admiration. Nature ſeemed every day to improve and to grow under my eyes. "What is it," ſaid I, to this tender friend, "I do not owe "you for all the comforts you have pro- "cured me? Before your arrival I "was in a kind of priſon, where I only "exiſted to be made ſenſible of the "moſt bitter regret. The days, thoſe "fine days which are uſhered in by a "beautiful morning, and which now "fill my heart with joy and pleaſure, "were loſt upon me. The mild freſh- "neſs of a pleaſant evening, which af- "fords us ſuch delightful ſatisfaction, "then made not the leaſt impreſſion on "me. My heart, deaf to pleaſure, only "liſtened to my grief. The ſadneſs of "my mind ſeemed reflected on all the "objects which ſurrounded me. I was as if "enveloped by a thick cloud, which your "preſence has diſſipated." M. d'Ermancour was charmed to hear me; he thought himſelf the happieſt of men, and continually applauded himſelf for the conſtancy with which he had remained

for

for ſo many years on that ſhore, where he had ſeen me thrown a few minutes before himſelf. " I was always unable to " come to a reſolution," ſaid he, " of " quitting this place; but was alſo " determined not to go to any great " diſtance from it. I always had a " kind of encouragement within me, " which I never loſt ſight of, and which " uſed to return to me after having run " over a great part of the foreſt. I have " many times changed my habitation; " but I never found myſelf at eaſe in any " other, but in the vicinity of that fatal " rock on which you was thrown when " torn from my arms, and where by the " flaſhes of lightning I beheld you for " a moment. I had ſtill my eyes fixed " on you in ſpite of the darkneſs which " followed the flaſhes, when a ſecond " clap of thunder, and a ſtill greater tempeſt, threw me with ſome of the ſhip's " crew on another rock, where the " veſſel was partly ſunk. We were caſt " on a ſand-bank, where I found myſelf almoſt buried; and in recovering

" my

" my ſenſes which brought me to a " knowledge of my misfortune, I felt " no other grief than that of having loſt " you. But this diſmal recital, which " you have ſo often aſked me for, affects " you too much. Your pale cheek, and " the tears I ſee ready to ſteal from your " eyes, make me repent having been " ſo minute in my account of paſt miſ- " fortunes; which we ought to forget." —" Ah, it is a gift of heaven, and a cer- " tain proof of your love for me," ſaid I, " that I now enjoy my preſent happi- " neſs. But why had not the dear author " of my life, that father ſo kind and " good, why had not he the ſame ad- " vantage with us? How came you to " be ſeparated? It is evident his loſs " was inevitable, ſince you was not able " to ſave him." " I am not undeſerving " the opinion you have formed of me, " charming Zelia; I have nothing to " reproach myſelf with, on that point. " But permit me to decline entering in- " to particulars on this ſubject. If you

" inſiſt on it, Jerome ſhall acquaint you " with it."

I had an opportunity the ſame evening to interrogate this honeſt man; whilſt M. d'Ermancour was employed in making preparations for a little voyage, which I ſhall ſoon give an account of. I was ſeated in the garden with Ninette, when Jerome came thither to ſow ſome beans. I called him to me. " Before you go " to work," ſaid I, " tell me all the " circumſtances of your hiſtory, of which " hitherto I have only had an imperfect " account. Where was you when " M. d'Ermancour found himſelf buried " in a bank of ſand?"

" Alas! Madam, I was not far from him when he opened his eyes for the firſt time, after a fainting fit of more than two hours. It took up all that time to diſengage him from the ſand which covered him; which employment reſtored me to life, by ſhewing me I could ſave his. When I had taken off the weight of ſand which had overwhelmed him, I obſerved him ſigh many times, and look every

where about him.——" Where am I, " my good friend?" ſaid he, as ſoon as he recollected me. " Where is Zelia? " What is become of her father? Alas! " if, as I have no doubt, it is by your " care I am reſtored to life, tell me " if I ought to preſerve it? Why," added he, " have you drawn me from " this bed of death?" Seeing I did not anſwer his queſtions, " Why," ſaid he, " did you not begin by ſaving the life of " that lovely girl, before you thought " of mine? Ah, reſtore her to me, my " dear friend; run, fly to her aſſiſtance; " it is not yet too late; conduct me to " her!" He was ſo entirely taken up with you, Madam, ſaid Jerome, that he refuſed all the aſſiſtance I could give him, till at length his ſenſes being quite recovered, he remembered to have ſeen you thrown on a rock far from him. " Ah, " I ſee her," ſaid he, " in the midſt of " thunder and lightning!" putting his hand upon his forehead. " It is in vain " to ſeek her on this ſhore, my friend; " ſhe is ſafe from the dangers of the ſea.

" But can ſhe have ſupported the terri-
" ble ſhock which threw her on the
" rock And her unfortunate friend—do
" you know any thing of her? All our
" companions in the veſſel alſo—what
" has become of them? Good God!"
added he, " what will become of me,
" if I have loſt the delight of my heart,
" my lovely miſtreſs, my adorable Ze-
" lia! Let us run to ſeek her, my good
" friend; I ſee nearly from hence the
" place where we ought to find her."

" But far from being able to run at this time, he could ſcarcely ſtand. " It " is there," ſaid he, ſhewing me the coaſt oppoſite to that on which we had been thrown, " it is there, where I " ſaw her, perhaps for the laſt time!" If he had not kept ſo ſtrongly to this falſe notion, added this faithful ſervant, we ſhould undoubtedly have met with you. But this dear and good maſter was ſo perſuaded that he muſt find you, either dead or alive, in the place where he thought he had ſeen you, that it was not poſſible to determine him to go and

ſeek for you on the other ſide; ſo that the further we went into the foreſt, the greater diſtance we went from you; and it was by a ſingular chance we ever met with you. But to return to what it imports you to know concerning your worthy father. We found him hanging upon the branches of a tree, that had been covered by the waves, which had carried him there from the ſhore in the midſt of the tempeſt. Judge of our aſtoniſhment, when, after being exhauſted with fatigue in trying to ſave ſome of the paſſengers whom we found half dead on the wreck of the veſſel, we heard the groans and cries of M. Mansfield, whoſe voice we knew. Day-light being now gone, we could not diſtinguiſh objects; but we ran to him, and enabled him to deſcend from the tree with ropes, which my maſter contrived to faſten to the branches, and by that means climbed up to him, and was able to ſave your unfortunate father, by making him ſlide down to the ground without being hurt. But he was ſo much ſpent both with cold and

hunger, that for a long time we deſpaired of his life: it was many hours before he at all recovered himſelf: and during fifteen days he had neither ſtrength nor ſenſe enough to know any one of us about him; and it was only the evening before he died, that he appeared to be ſenſible of his ſituation. He then deſired to be carried to Batavia to be buried."

This melancholy recital, which had drawn my attention hitherto with the hope of a more favourable event, notwithſtanding I was but too certain of my father's death, renewed all my ſorrows. The particulars of this cruel death drew from me a pitiful cry. "He is then no more!" ſaid I, raiſing my eyes and hands to heaven. "He is dead without knowing whether I ſtill exiſted. He had not even the conſolation of thinking that he left behind him a tender heart, over which he had entire command; a grateful daughter, who will ever remember his goodneſs, and will never forget the laſt proofs of his love and tenderneſs!"

Ninette,

Ninette, who was ſome paces diſtant from me, employed in gathering flowers, or rather in avoiding Jerome, whom ſhe dared not approach too nearly, delayed not to run towards me as ſoon as ſhe heard my cries and concern.

" M. Jerome," ſaid ſhe, obſerving the tears which ran down my cheeks, " you " make my mamma unhappy; which is " not right: ſhe loves you, and is al- " ways telling me you are very good; " but you cannot imagine I can believe " it."

The poor fellow, who was already much concerned at the ſtate in which he ſaw me, retired with ſorrow into the middle of the garden, without ſaying any thing for his juſtification. Senſible as I was of the tender concern my little friend had ſhewn for me, but at the ſame time hurt by the pain ſhe had given this honeſt man, I made her ſenſible of the injuſtice ſhe had done him; at the ſame time obſerving to her, how grateful I was for her attachment to me. Her affectionate heart took a pleaſure

in thinking ſhe had ſent away the perſon who had cauſed me to weep. I then aſked her, what ſhe thought of poor Jerome, who had only met with reproaches for having complied with my requeſt. "I think," ſaid ſhe, "were I him, I "ſhould be very ſorry to have made you "uneaſy, and that would teach him in "future to avoid any ſuch melancholy "converſations." — "You are in the "right, my dear, if Jerome had actu-"ally given me uneaſineſs. But why "ſhould you ſuſpect him of having com-"mitted a fault, when he has only given "me proofs of his obedience, by yield-"ing to my repeated requeſts? It is "true, he has made me ſhed tears; but "he has given me great ſatisfaction, and "I ſhall always think myſelf obliged to "his complaiſance, for giving me a re-"cital, the particulars of which are ſo "much the more intereſting to me, as "they have informed me of new obli-"gations I am under to M. d'Erman-"cour."

I have

I have repeated this converſation between me and my little companion, only to make known the amiable diſpoſition of this dear child; whoſe underſtanding and ſenſibility began to unfold and ſhew itſelf in all her actions. She was, at the time I am ſpeaking of, the exact picture of her mother in miniature; ſhe had, like her, the moſt intereſting countenance; her features were regular and beautiful; ſhe poſſeſſed the graces in every movement, and was perfectly elegant in her perſon and ſhape. What pity, have I often ſaid to myſelf, on ſeeing this lovely creature improve ſo faſt, that ſo many amiable qualities ſhould be buried in a Deſert! And what a misfortune for me, ſhould the goodneſs of her heart fall ſhort of the perfections of her perſon! But I was not long in perceiving how amiable her diſpoſition was; which might eaſily be traced in the delicate and lovely features of her face. The liberty which I always gave her, of expreſſing her ſentiments as ſhe liked, gave me an opportunity of diſcovering her happy diſpoſi-

tion. The ſolitude of the Deſert, nor the want of all kind of emulation, did not prevent her from acquiring and poſſeſſing the moſt amiable qualities, which I took infinite pleaſure in cultivating, both for my own ſatisfaction and our mutual benefit. I have already mentioned the methods I uſed for her education during her infancy. Thoſe which I afterwards employed, to direct her mind, and inſpire her with a love of virtue, were equally plain and ſimple. She had no precepts or reproofs, but what were founded on facts, as may be ſeen by the adventure with Jerome, to whom ſhe had given pain without reflection, by her too great zeal for me, and perhaps alſo from the diſlike ſhe had to his perſon. Whatever it was, as ſoon as ſhe had heard his juſtification, ſhe ſaw ſhe had been to blame, and ſhe acknowledged it with bluſhes. But as I never let ſlip any occaſion of diſcovering the real thoughts of her heart, I aſked her why ſhe ſeemed aſhamed of having formed an unjuſt opinion of a man ſhe was unacquainted

acquainted with. I added, it was a very pardonable error, ſince it frequently happened with people we were well acquainted with; and I gave her due praiſe for confeſſing her fault, which ceaſed to be one from the time ſhe was ſenſible of it. I then changed the converſation, to ſee if ſhe would return to it herſelf. She had openly acknowledged her error; but ſhe neither ſaid nor did any thing to repair it. Her little heart ſuffered much from the embarraſſment in which ſhe found herſelf; ſhe felt that ſhe ought to make excuſes to Jerome, not only on his own account, but on mine, who appeared ſo intereſted for him. However, ſhe was not able at that time to imagine it poſſible to love a man like Jerome, who had nothing the leaſt agreeable or intereſting in his perſon. Even M.d'Ermancour did not always pleaſe her. There were moments, and ſometimes days, when ſhe would not come near him; and when I have aſked her the reaſon, ſhe has ſaid, ſhe was not afraid of him, but ſhe did not like to hear his hoarſe

voice ſo near. It was worſe with regard to Jerome, whom for ſome time after his arrival ſhe looked upon as a beaſt of the foreſt. At the time I am ſpeaking ſhe had conquered thoſe fears, but ſhe had ſtill enough to make her look at him with diſlike. But as ſhe had the greateſt compaſſion for all ſuffering beings, ſhe was perfectly ſenſible of the pain ſhe had given this good man, and of the neceſſity ſhe was under of going to ſeek him and beg his pardon. This ſhe did, after having aſked me if I thought Jerome would be good enough to forgive her, and then return to me to finiſh his ſtory. To my great ſurpriſe ſhe brought him herſelf back to me, leading him by the hand: I ſay to my great ſurpriſe, becauſe till that moment, if ever it happened that Jerome's hand touched hers, ſhe never failed taking her handkerchief to wipe the place. I was charmed to ſee ſhe had conquered this diſlike, and was ſtill better pleaſed with poor Jerome, who never ceaſed praiſing the goodneſs of my little friend. I took her in my

arms

arms and highly applauded her action, which gave me hopes of ſeeing her very ſoon, as I had always wiſhed, get the better of her prejudice. From this time ſhe conducted herſelf much better, and accuſtomed herſelf by degrees to think that this man, whom ſhe had been ſo much afraid of, was not miſchievous, but on the contrary very gentle and complaiſant. Theſe remarks, which ſhe communicated to me as ſhe made them, became every day more intereſting to me and M. d'Ermancour, to whom I repeated them.

But to return to the hiſtory which Ninette had interrupted. Jerome informed me, that a part of the ſhip's company whom they had aſſiſted had ſaved themſelves on the wreck of the ſhip, ſome in boats, and ſome on planks, and had been ſo fortunate as to gain the ſide of a veſſel which paſſed by near the place of our ſhipwreck, and was going to Batavia; and that the corpſe of my unfortunate father, who was then juſt dead, was alſo put on board. "But fortunately," added

added he, "the veſſel did not dare to come "any nearer the place where we were, leſt "they alſo ſhould meet with the ſame diſ-"aſter."--"I ſee nothing fortunate in it," ſaid I, interrupting him. He then told me, his maſter being determined not to take this opportunity of quitting the Iſland, it was fortunate for them that they were not deprived of the effects which they had ſaved from the ſhipwreck. He afterwards told me, he believed that my governeſs, Madame Maſtrique, went in the ſhip; but he was not certain, becauſe he had only ſeen her at a diſtance; and he added, that he thought this good woman, who had been caſt on ſhore at ſome diſtance from the place where the veſſel had ſtruck, had neither ſeen nor heard of them.

After lamenting the loſs of my good governeſs, I praiſed her much for having profited by the opportunity which ſhe had ſo happily met with. I then returned to the ſubject of M. d'Ermancour, who had the reſolution to refuſe this favourable occaſion in the cruel ſituation he was in. "What

"do

" do I not owe him," ſaid I, " for ſuch " conſtancy! What has he not ſuffered " during the many years in which he has " been ſeeking me! Ah, my poor Je- " rome, what gratitude alſo do I owe " you for not having abandoned your " maſter!" " It was not my maſter's fault that I did not leave him," ſaid this honeſt man. " As he is the moſt honour- able and moſt generous of mortals, he would not ſuffer me to ſtay with him, till he had made uſe of every argument to prevail on me to take the opportunity which offered, and which I might one day or other repent of having miſſed. I was of his opinion, and I confeſs that I entreated him in my turn to follow the ſame counſel which he gave me, making uſe of the ſame reaſons which he had employed to convince me. But he told me I had not the ſame motives which he had for ſuch a ſacrifice." " What " would you have me look for in a " world where I ſhall never find my " Zelia? What attractions can draw " me thither? Should I not be more

" out

" out of my way, and more miſerable, than
" in this foreſt, where the hope, however
" ſmall, of one day finding her again,
" will help to ſupport me. But you, my
" good friend, who are not retained by
" the ſame cauſe, and who have not
" the ſame reluctance to return to the
" world, which offers you a thouſand
" reſources, do not puniſh me with hav-
" ing to reproach myſelf for your miſ-
" fortunes. Go you, and carry to my
" parents the ſad news of their only
" ſon. Tell them I hope to ſee them
" again, when I ſhall have found her
" who alone can make me happy. No-
" thing would equal my felicity, if I
" could one day ſee in their arms this
" adored girl, who, by being proud to
" belong to ſuch reſpectable parents,
" would teſtify her love and gratitude
" to me. What delicious moments
" would theſe be for me, when I ſhould
" ſee tears of joy run down thoſe cheeks
" which are now bathed in ſorrow! Be-
" loved parents, it is I who have cauſed
" them to flow, but who would willingly

" dry

" dry them at the expence of my life: " Alas! if it were only my life that would " put an end to your troubles, I ſhould " not heſitate a moment.——But," ſaid he, turning round to the foreſt, " par- " don the ſacred motive which keeps " me here; an adored creature expects " from me, and from my affection, that aſ- " ſiſtance which the moſt indifferent " perſon could not refuſe her. What " an inſenſible and inhuman wretch " muſt he be, who could abandon ſo " lovely a woman to the horrors of this " Deſert! Think of my ſad ſituation, " generous and tender father! put your- " ſelf in my place, and you will feel, " like me, the wounds of a heart which " you have formed to virtue. The ap- " probation which you have given to " my paſſion, is a ſufficient authority for " me to follow the inclination of my " heart, in forcing me, in ſpite of my- " ſelf, from that tender intereſt which " would otherwiſe bring me to your " arms."

" The

" The ſhip ſailed," ſaid this faithful ſervant, " while my maſter was breathing his complaints, and ſeeking to excuſe himſelf to his own heart with reſpect to his parents. " For my part," added he, " although I never repented the part I had taken, I yet could not ſee the ſhip getting out of ſight, without feeling a kind of uneaſineſs which made me turn pale and tremble; and when I could no longer diſtinguiſh it, and had no longer any hope of eſcaping from the ſolitude before me, it appeared ſtill more black and dreadful. M. d'Ermancour, who obſerved my weakneſs, reproached me with inconſiſtency. " This is what I " feared," ſaid he, looking towards the ſea, to obſerve if there were any method left for me to reach the ſhip. But his idea, which I gueſſed, and the concern which I ſaw in his looks, gave me new courage. " No," ſaid I, " my " dear maſter, do not ſeek to ſend me " from hence ſince you remain here. " Were the ſhip but two paces from the " ſhore I would not go into it. Par-

" don

" don me a moment of weakneſs, and " diſpoſe of my future fate: ſee me here " ready to follow you wherever deſtiny " leads you, or whatever is to be done!" —" Keep up this faithful attachment " to me," ſaid this good maſter, taking me in his arms; " and believe that I " ſhall ever be your moſt ſincere and " grateful friend. Come and aſſiſt me " in my ſearch; let us run, let us fly " to the aſſiſtance of the moſt intereſting " object in nature. Good God!" ſaid he, as he ſet out to examine the foreſt, " conduct my ſteps to the path which " has been beaten by the delicate feet " of my charming Zelia; help me to " diſcover the place where her fatigued " body in vain ſeeks that repoſe which " the horror of her ſituation doubtleſs " refuſes her! Watch from the heavens " over her valuable life!"

" His prayers were heard," ſaid this honeſt man, looking at me. " Heaven has preſerved you as beautiful as ever, and by a kind of miracle has permitted you to find, in the midſt of a Deſert, not only

only the neceſſaries of life, but the conveniencies alſo. We were not ſo fortunate; notwithſtanding that, I have never repented partaking with my honoured maſter his bad fortune; and I am now well recompenſed. Your goodneſs to me, and the politeneſs which Mademoiſelle Ninette has juſt ſhewn me, complete my happineſs." I was melted even to tears in liſtening to this faithful domeſtic, and not leſs affected with the great attention my little companion had paid to his recital. She aſked Jerome a thouſand queſtions of thoſe things which ſhe could not comprehend.

"I underſtand very well," ſaid ſhe, "that you came here to ſee mamma; but "I cannot tell where you could be be- "fore you found her; nor why you "ſhould be ſo ſorry when the ſhip went "away and left you. M. d'Erman- "cour, whom you wanted to go in "order to ſeek his parents, has inte- "reſted me much by his regret on their "account. I want to know where his "parents are; for," ſaid ſhe, looking

at

at the ſea, " I ſee nothing but water on " that ſide where you wiſhed to go." We made her underſtand, as well as we could, that there was beyond that ſea houſes without number, and many people ſuch as we were, and that it was there M. d'Ermancour's parents lived. —" He has left them," ſaid Jerome to her, " for your mamma's ſake, and for " yours, in the hope of being able one " day or other to carry you both back " to his own country. Should you not " be glad to ſee this world which you " are unacquainted with?"——" No," ſaid ſhe, throwing herſelf into my arms; " I had rather ſtay here with my mamma." We ſhall ſoon find ſhe did not always retain that opinion.

" Our ſearches for many years proved fruitleſs," continued Jerome, " becauſe our ſteps were directed to the ſide oppoſite your habitation. My maſter was ſo fully perſuaded he had ſeen you caſt on the right ſide, inſtead of the left, that this miſled us; and we might have continued

nued in the ſame error till now, had not ſome good people put us in the way."

I interrupted him by exclaiming, "How did you meet with any perſons "who were able to point out to you my "habitation?" "Alas!" anſwered he, "it is ſtill almoſt a miracle that we have been able to find you. It was at the time we were almoſt deſpairing, that by the moſt fortunate chance we met with thoſe perſons who gave us the firſt information that you was ſtill alive. We had inhabited this foreſt about ſeven years: who could ever believe, that we ſhould live ſo long a time in the neighbourhood of your dwelling, without having been able to diſcover any thing of it! But inſurmountable obſtacles concealed you from our conſtant and earneſt ſearches. The ſmall ſpot of ground which you inhabit, although very near to that which we made choice of, was inacceſſible to us. On one ſide, the enormous high mountain rendered the paſſage to the foreſt impracticable; on another, the ſea proved an obſtacle equally invincible.

invincible. Beſides which, as I have obſerved before, my maſter had entertained a wrong idea of the place where you was ſhipwrecked. All theſe accidents, which chance ſeemed to have brought together for our mutual misfortunes, prove but too well the truth of our ſurpriſing hiſtory. One morning coming from the banks of the ſea, according to our uſual cuſtom before we went into the foreſt, we perceived a ſmall boat coming towards us. I cannot deſcribe, Madam, what I felt when I ſaw this ſmall veſſel approach near enough for us to diſtinguiſh that it held two men and two women. I looked at my maſter, and found him as much aſtoniſhed and in as great emotion as myſelf. We ſtopped ſome moments without ſpeaking; but the tears which I ſaw fall from his eyes gave a free courſe to my ſobs and ſighs. "Heaven be bleſt!" ſaid I, "my "dear maſter," throwing myſelf into his arms; "we at laſt ſhall have an end to "our griefs."

"Ah, let us not flatter ourſelves," ſaid he, preſſing me to his heart. "What "comfort

" comfort can theſe people afford us? " they cannot change my ſituation, un- " leſs they could bring me news of my " Zelia."—" What," ſaid I to him, " will you not accept of the means which " offer for quitting this place?" " No," replied he, without giving me time to proceed, " not unleſs it is to find " her whom I have ſo long been in " ſearch of. But," ſaid he, " do not let " us neglect gaining what information " we can from theſe men. Let us en- " deavour to make them ſee us, by " making ſigns to them;" which they immediately obſerved, and we ſaw them turn the boat towards our ſide of the ſhore, and come near enough for us to ſpeak to each other. But our grief was very great when we found theſe good people did not underſtand us; at which they alſo appeared to be concerned.

" At laſt M. d'Ermancour, who underſtood many languages, made them comprehend him, by ſome few Spaniſh words which he had learnt from a miſ-

ſionary;

ſionary; for I ſhould tell you, Madam, theſe people were poor Indians, who had never ſeen any Europeans, except a few Jeſuits. What made us think ſo was, that they took my maſter for one of theſe fathers, as at the firſt word he pronounced of the catholic religion they made the ſign of the croſs, and put themſelves on their knees, demanding his bleſſing. M. d'Ermancour held out his hand to them in token of friendſhip, and invited them to come on ſhore, which they did after having conſulted together. M. d'Ermancour then addreſſed himſelf to the perſon who appeared the eldeſt of the company, and aſked him whither they were going? Before he gave my maſter an anſwer, he looked around him with a troubled countenance, as if to ſee whether they had any thing to fear. "I am "not afraid for myſelf," ſaid he; "it is "my family whom I am fearful of expoſ- "ing to danger." This we partly underſtood by ſigns, and partly from a bad kind of Spaniſh jargon. He then preſented his wife to us, and begged our hoſpi-

tality towards her and his ſon and daughter, to whom he ſaid ſomething as they came forward which ſeemed to give them courage. The manner in which we welcomed them diſſipated their fears, and gave them confidence to accept our invitation to follow us to our dwelling. We made them enter it, in order to preſent them with ſome trifles, which they received with great pleaſure; but they gave us a great deal more, by telling us they had ſeen you in a part of the iſland where we had never been."

I here interrupted Jerome, to aſk him, how theſe people could have ſeen me, without my perceiving them? "They "only ſaw you for one moment," ſaid he, "as they were coaſting along, for "they did not ſee your habitation. "You were ſeated on the declivity of a "rock, with a book in your hand, "when they paſſed you near enough to "diſtinguiſh your beauty, and the at-"tention you paid to your book."— "What you tell me," ſaid I, "makes "me tremble; how terrified ſhould I

" have been, if I had ſeen theſe ſtrange " people ſo near me! But go on, my " dear friend, and acquaint me by what " means you diſcovered the place of my " retreat with ſo little inſtruction; and " tell me what is become of theſe good " people, for whom I am greatly inte- " reſted."

" You will love them ſtill more, Madam, when you learn that they remained ſix months with us, in order to aſſiſt us in finding you out; and that before they quitted us, they procured us the means of coming near you by way of the ſea, after having made many fruitleſs attempts to get through the foreſt.

" But it was by a ſingular chance that theſe good people thought of mentioning the having ſeen you. We had brought into our cabin all the effects we had ſaved from the ſhip. They were, and are ſtill in coffers, which were faſtened by nails, and placed the whole length of the chamber, in which we regaled our new viſiters. My maſter, after having aſked them many queſtions con-

cerning their route, to find out whether they never had occaſion to quit their veſſel, and to go over the foreſt, began to deſpair of learning any thing more from them. When, having ordered me to take ſome linen out of the coffers to preſent to theſe good people, who were almoſt half-naked, I was obliged, fortunately, in order to find what I wanted, to take out ſeveral parts of a woman's dreſs, which were in the ſame ſtate as when you packed them; ſome caps in particular, which the young woman obſerved put her in mind of the fine lady ſhe ſaw upon the rock, and upon whom ſhe had ſeen ſuch a one. She cried out with joy and ſurpriſe, and ſhewed them to her parents, who converſed about them for ſome time; and then the young woman ſeemed to demand by ſigns, with great earneſtneſs in her manner, what was become of the perſon to whom theſe things belonged. By means of geſtures, and a few Spaniſh words, M. d'Ermancour made her underſtand that he knew not what was become of her, and that he had been a

long

long time ſeeking after her, without ſucceſs. Preſently after, this good and innocent creature clapped her hands together, and, jumping with joy, ſhe repeated ſome words in her own language many times over, and looked at her father, whom ſhe ſeemed as if ſhe was engaging to take ſome ſtep which we could not underſtand: and he, without ſaying a word to my maſter, went out immediately to make ſome little reparations to his boat. The young woman ſeemed ſo enchanted with the beautiful lady ſhe had obſerved, that, by dint of the ſigns which ſhe made, ſhe convinced us it muſt be you whom ſhe had ſeen; and her father on his return confirmed it, by offering to conduct us in his boat, to ſhew us the place where he alſo had ſeen this divine perſon. "Ah, my fa-
"ther!" cried M. d'Ermancour, throwing himſelf into the arms of the old man: "I ſhould be indebted to you for more "than life, if you can put me in a way "to recover what is moſt dear to me on "earth. Be aſſured my gratitude ſhall

"be

" be in proportion to the benefit: let us " go, my worthy and reſpectable friend, " and reſtore happineſs to my mind, " which has been wounded with the " deepeſt ſorrow. Let us fly to the " ſuccour of this charming creature, the " ſingle view of whom inſpired you " with ſuch admiration. Ah, my " dear friend," ſaid he to me, " it is " ſhe, without doubt, it is my adorable " Zelia whom they took for a divinity. " She really is the image of it, and its " moſt beautiful reſemblance."

" Every thing was ſoon put in order for this little voyage; and as the boat could only hold three or four perſons, it was determined that I ſhould remain in the cabin with the two women; but the youngeſt entreated much that they would let her go with them. During theſe arrangements, my maſter had gone into a little room, in which was my bed, in order to dreſs himſelf; which he had for a long time neglected, though he had never given up his accuſtomed neatneſs, to which he always paid the greateſt attention.

tention. He ſoon made his appearance again, more adorned by the happy proſpect of recovering his adored Zelia, than by the new clothes which he had put on.

" The joy and felicity which ſhone in his countenance gave a delightful cheerfulneſs to his noble and pleaſing features. He aſtoniſhed our new friends and me when he came to us. The young woman in particular did not appear to know him, and ſeemed by her anxious looks to ſeek for the man ſhe had ſeen on her firſt arrival. Her eyes were ſtill fixed on the door of the little room, whilſt my maſter ſpoke to her. " Do you go " with us, my pretty maid?" ſaid he to her, and at the ſame time pointed to the ſea-ſide, inviting her to accompany him, that ſhe might be witneſs to the happineſs he was going to enjoy by her means. But Maria (that was her name) had no longer any deſire to go. She waited for the man whom ſhe had ſeen enter the chamber. This ſimplicity might have amuſed us longer, if my maſter,

maſter, whoſe impatience to find you would admit of no delay, had not engaged the old man and his ſon to follow him directly. They were but juſt embarked, when Maria ran after them, having cleared up her doubts by going to the chamber, where ſhe was much aſtoniſhed not to find the perſon ſhe ſaw go into it; but her mother then made uſe of her authority to prevent her from going.

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END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.